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THE UNPREPARED PEACE

FEW wars have ended with the victors so "magnificently unprepared for the long littleness" of peace. The explanation can hardly lie in failure to foresee the emergence of problems which were bound to arise immediately the last shot was fired. Indeed, the European Advisory Council was established precisely for the purpose of planning for the immediate post-hostility period. If no plans were in fact concerted, the reason is, chiefly, that all the members of the Council felt themselves precluded from taking decisions on any major issue without reference to their respective Governments. This procedure was singularly unproductive of results, because the Big Three were too preoccupied with the task of winning the war to devote much attention to the problems of peace.

The result is deplorable. Even in the case of Germany there are no signs of united Allied policy either in relation to the German military hierarchy or the war criminals, or indeed any of the immediate administrative questions that are arising. Even the zones of military occupation, on which (it was believed) definite agreement had been reached, now seem to be fluid and confused. The very establishment of the Tripartite Control Commission, which was to co-ordinate from Berlin the inter-Allied administration of Germany, appears to be in suspense, while the urgent task of planning next winter's food supplies for thickly populated industrial areas of Germany is held up by lack of agreement as to the quantity of foodstuffs which the Russians will allow to be exported from the grain-growing areas which they have occupied. Even more unaccountably, there has been no meeting yet in Berlin between the Allied Supreme Commander and Marshal Zhukov—a step which we should have thought was immediately essential in order to bring Allied military administrations into line. As matters are shaping, there is a real danger of Germany being irrevocably divided into separate uncoordinated occupational zones in which divergent policies of all sorts will crystallise.

But the problem of Germany does not stand alone. It is now equally clear that the idea entertained both in London and Washington of keeping all questions of frontier adjustment in cold storage until national passions aroused by the war had cooled, and a formal Peace Conference had been convened, is completely unworkable. Apart from doubts which may be entertained whether any Peace Conference after the pattern of Versailles will ever be held, it is becoming painfully obvious that, with Europe a vast camp of armed men, the march of events will not await the pleasure of Allied statesmen. All over the Continent a great game of animal grab has already begun.

At the moment, it is the "crisis" of Trieste which is hitting the headlines. Here the local *modus vivendi*, which we noted last week, still holds good, if somewhat precariously: General Alexander's forces are still in unmolested possession of the dock area of Trieste, while the rest of the town is in the hands of Yugoslav National Liberation troops. The Yugoslav Government, so far as can be judged from the line taken by Belgrade Radio, is willing to submit its territorial claims to a Big Three conference, but the U.S. Government (not unmindful perhaps of the large numbers of the Italian-born electorate in the U.S.A.), has noted with growing disfavour that the whole of Istria up to, and even beyond, the line of the Isonzo is being packed with Yugoslav troops, while other divisions of Marshal Tito's army have moved into a strip of Carinthia immediately south of Villach and Klagenfurt, with Bulgarian contingents, operating under Marshal Tolbukhin's command, also in Austria to the east of them. At an earlier date, there was reason to believe that Moscow had frowned on Yugoslav claims to frontier adjustments between Slovenia and Austria. Has the policy of Moscow altered, and is Marshal Stalin now backing Yugoslav nationalism in its more extreme forms? The apprehension undoubtedly exists in the minds of the U.S. State Department and the British Foreign Office that they are likely to be presented, in Istria and Carinthia, with a *fait accompli*, in which the Allies may have to choose between acquiescence and the incalculable perils of military operations against Marshal Tito.

But it is not only the Yugoslavs who are busily engaged in endeavouring to demonstrate that possession is nine points of the law. With the evident sanction of the U.S.S.R., the Warsaw Government is reported to have despatched a Polish Military Commission to take over the administration of Frankfurt-on-Oder. It is true that at Yalta it was agreed that Poland should receive compensation westwards in return for a Curzon Line frontier adjustment with the U.S.S.R., but neither Washington nor London, so far as we are aware, has ever endorsed specifically a German-Polish frontier along the line of the Oder and the Neisse. Yet this presumably is implied in the establishment of Polish authority as far west as Frankfurt. Again, there appears to have been an attempt by the Greek Government (with the blessing, we should guess, of the local British authorities in Athens) to "jump" the Dodecanese Islands. We are now told that the visit to the Islands of the Greek Regent has "episcopal," not political, significance. But this sounds like a belated effort to make wiser second thoughts prevail. Equally, we are told that no particular importance need be attached to French activities in Piedmont, where, apparently, a plebiscite is being organised in the hope that the inhabitants of certain valleys into which French troops have infiltrated will opt for the transfer of the territory from Italy to France. As compared with the future of Eastern Germany, or even of Istria, unilateral acts in the Dodecanese and the Piedmont are of minor importance, but the spirit of animal grab is infectious.

If *de facto* settlements with no sanction behind them save that of armed force, and with no justification even in inter-Allied agreement, are not to bedevil the peace, we would urge the need for an immediate meeting of the Big Three. The whole experience of the war has been that only at a personal meeting between heads of States is there any chance of agreed decisions on major issues. Until such a meeting is held, we foresee that the situation will daily deteriorate, each fresh divergence in Allied policy arousing acrimony and suspicions on both sides of the barrier which is now unhappily in process of erection across the middle of Europe.

At San Francisco

The business of drafting amendments to the Dumbarton Oaks plan goes forward at San Francisco fairly smoothly. The Big Five are now agreed on a revised formula defining the rights of a regional organisation to take action for maintaining security on its own initiative. Some American States had thought of invoking the Monroe Doctrine in such a way as to reject any interference by the Security Council in their Hemisphere. The new draft provides that nothing in the Charter shall lessen the right of a regional group to adopt measures of defence when an armed attack has actually been launched, and the Security Council has taken no action. The group must, however, report to the Council. This applies also to the French claim under the Franco-Soviet pact to take action against Germany without the authorisation of the Council. In its earlier form this looked like a claim to take such measures as M. Poincaré's invasion of the Ruhr without the Council's approval. It is now made clear that this right can be exercised only if Germany should be guilty of a physical act of aggression. In its final form the clause seems unobjectionable and, indeed, inevitable. Less progress, however, has been made in drafting the new clauses dealing with the "trusteeship" proposals which are to replace the League's system of mandates. The Americans are keen on providing for the regular inspection of "trustee" dependencies by an *ad hoc* Council. On the other hand, they wish to subordinate the strategic key-positions which they mean to claim, chiefly in the Pacific, to the Security Council rather than the Trusteeship Council. The Russians, who possess no colonies outside the Soviet Union, are none the less anxious to have a seat on the Trusteeship Council. They also wish to strengthen the general instruction given to Trustees, so that they shall be required to aim not merely at self-government for their Wards but at "full national independence."

Liberation of Czechoslovakia

The fact that Prague, in the end, was liberated, not by the Americans, but by the Russians, has spared the Big Three yet another source of trouble; but it cost Czech blood that joint Allied action could have saved The Czech rising was a joint undertaking of all the underground forces. The chairman of the National Council which led the rising was a Left-wing University professor; his deputy and the driving force behind the scenes was a young Communist. The rest were mostly professional officers. The hope that the rising would spread from Prague all over the country was not fulfilled, probably because the Czech peasants held back. The rising, unlike that of 1918, was as much a social revolution as an outburst of national sentiments. A proclamation issued by the National Council stated clearly that what the people were fighting for was not only liberation from German oppression, but also Freedom from Want. The Communist leader Gottwald, speaking on behalf of the Government, said there could be no return to the pre-Munich state of affairs. It will be no easy task for Dr. Benes to bring these revolutionary forces into line with Czechoslovak democratic tradition. First, a new constitution is necessary to give Czech-Slovak relations a new basis. The Government is also committed to placing under State control key industries, banking, insurance, natural resources and electricity. The general elections will be the real test for Czech democracy. So far, the facade of Czech political life has been preserved, though naturally the Communists make their influence felt. Significantly enough, it was the Communist leader in the Government, and not the Premier, who made the first programme speech after the Government's return to Prague.

Belgium's Monarchy

King Leopold—acting, no doubt, under strong pressure from the Belgian Government—has wisely decided that his health does not permit an immediate return to Belgium and has requested his brother, in the meantime, to continue as Regent. Had he arrived back, intent on resuming his Royal prerogatives, as some of his Right-wing supporters in the Senate have been urging, he would have precipitated a serious internal crisis which might have wrecked M. van Acker's Government and brought on a fresh wave of unrest. As it is, street demonstrations continue. The point at issue in Belgium is not so much constitutional as personal and social; it is generally agreed that this is not the moment for making irrevocable decisions about the future of the monarchy. But for most Liberals, as well as the Left parties, King Leopold is identified with the old order, with the men who either collaborated with the Nazis, or, like those behind the cabinet of M. Pierlot, sought to preserve the interests of bankers and industrialists from the radical enthusiasm of the Liberation movement. The role played by the King in 1940 and the years before the war is still a matter of dispute, though it is difficult to see how the Royalists can in honesty justify his actions. The obvious desire of the Right to divert pressure for social reform into a sterile constitutional debate, has not gone unregarded in Belgium. The decision to postpone the issue, at least until some of the more urgent tasks of reconstruction have been accomplished, seems sensible.

The Next Move in Spain

Struggling at the last minute to adapt himself to his new and uncongenial environment in Europe, General Franco has taken comfort from the admission of Argentina to the San Francisco Conference. As his organ *Madrid* puts it: "She regains grace without any substantial change of persons in the Government or any change in the system. And that is logical. What matters to the others is the relations held with them." But was it wise, if that is Franco's reckoning, to stage a solemn requiem mass for Hitler, which the Falangists attended in all their war-paint? We are, however, more concerned with the reactions of the British and American Governments to Franco's efforts to change his spots. It is improbable, in spite of Mr. Churchill's "kind words," that any countenance will be given to Franco himself, whose day is manifestly over. The danger is rather that the Monarchy will be favoured, while the efforts of Republicans like Dr. Negrin to restore unity are discouraged. As for the Pretender Don Juan, his political outlook is sufficiently defined by the fact that he offered his sword to Franco in the early days of his rebellion.

Prisoners' Charter

The establishment of an international prison code would be a very welcome complement to whatever World organisation may emerge from San Francisco. Even if the code were first limited to a definition of elementary human rights, once affirmed, it would establish a principle of decency in an age where the concentration camp has been more typical than *habeas corpus*. It would require, of course, an international inspectorate—a task which might initially fall to the International Red Cross—which would probably have to rely on public opinion for its main sanction. But to protest that too few States would permit entry to their prisons or the protection of their inmates by the inspectorate is to become resigned to a future without conscience or justice. In the world most men wish to make, it can never be too soon to attempt something which may help to restore sanity and respect for the individual.

Verdict on Famine

The report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Bengal famine is a commendably frank document, which divides responsibility pretty evenly between the Central Government and that of Bengal. It estimates the mortality at about 1,500,000 and traces the material cause even more to the deficiency in the winter rice crop of 1942 than to the loss of imports from Burma. It stresses in its criticisms, as we did in these columns, chiefly the "disastrous" decision of New Delhi to decontrol prices in March 1943, and to return to unfettered free trade, together with the delay in planning the movement of supplies from surplus provinces and in introducing rationing. The Bengal Government, on its side, lacked foresight and was dilatory and inefficient. A plain-spoken paragraph calls for the punishment of corruption among its officials both high and low, and points out that the Bengal health service was even in normal times wholly inadequate. Among the recommendations is a suggested system of monopoly purchase of food grains and the development of co-operative societies as part of the procurement system.

Labour and San Francisco

Sir Walter Citrine has let fly on the subject of the refusal of the Trade Union demand for consultative representation at the San Francisco Conference. Yet it was bound to be rejected both by the Americans and by our own Conservatives—indeed, by Conservatives and *bourgeois* politicians almost everywhere. In the eyes of such persons, Labour is merely one interest among a great number, and an interest which, until recently, they considered themselves to be fully entitled to suppress as far as they dared. No doubt the Americans have included Trade Union advisers among their delegates at San Francisco, but that is quite a different thing from recognising the World Trade Union Conference as an independent international force. That, however, is how the leaders of the Labour movement do regard it; and they can see no valid reason why, having been recognised as an integral part of the I.L.O., they should not be given an analogous position in deliberations upon the world's political and economic future as a whole. This is a real clash of policies and philosophies on a world plane; and it will be resolved only by the resolution of the issues of social power which will have to be settled now or soon in every country.

Labour Direction

How far shall the power of Labour direction be maintained now that the war in Europe is at an end? It cannot be given up altogether in face of the continuing shortage of labour; for an abandonment of all control would probably lead to an extensive migration of workers back to their home towns and to great confusion when they found their old places of work not available to receive them. There is, however, strong Trade Union opposition to the continued imposition of penalties of imprisonment or fine for infringing the direction of the Ministry of Labour. These penalties apply theoretically to employers as well as workers; but in practice only workers are affected by them. The Trade Union Congress is pressing for their immediate abolition, while willing to retain the penalty of disqualification for receipt of unemployment benefit when a worker leaves the job to which he has been directed. The decision to cease the ballot for the "Bevin boys" will be generally welcomed, despite the shortage of pit labour. It has caused more discontent and friction than the somewhat meagre results have justified.

Man-Power and Planning

We are glad to see that Mr. Bevin, in his two most recent speeches, has stated the essential priority of the "man-power budget" over the "financial budget" in the framing of reconstruction policy. To think in terms of man-power

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(and secondarily in terms of factory equipment and supplies of materials) rather than in terms of money is, of course, the first essential for working out a practicable policy of full employment. But, while man-power is the basic determinant of productive capacity, the right apportionment of the available supplies of it requires a right adjustment of the physical resources upon which it is to work. Man-power planning implies economic planning in a very much wider sense; and we wish we could feel that the plans of other departments, such as the Board of Trade, were well advanced in these other respects. The Board of Trade is supposed, according to the White Paper on Employment Policy, to be the department generally responsible for distribution of industry, including the reopening of closed factories and the turn-over from war to peace production. But the Board of Trade, as far as we can discover, has been planning energetically only for the attraction of industries into the old depressed areas, and has been doing little—and, indeed, has power to do but little—over a wider field. That this is Mr. Dalton's fault we do not believe: it is the fault of those who are against planning and will see to it that this Government does not embark on any plan that would offend the susceptibilities of "private enterprise."

The Order of the Going

As for demobilisation, Mr. Bevin showed, on Wednesday, that he is determined to stick closely to the arrangement whereby release is to depend mainly on age and length of service, and wants to keep down to the minimum release based on the need for particular kinds of workers in order to get industries restarted quickly. He clearly fears that trouble might arise in the Forces if it came to be believed that release can be got only by wangling. A system which means that release depends mainly on an employer making out a plausible case for the release of a particular man is obviously liable to abuse. At the same time we question whether the proposed scale of Category B releases will meet the needs either of mining or the building industry.

PARLIAMENT: Dawn of Resettlement

Wednesday, 3.30 p.m.

Four lights of glass were cleared of their wartime darkening just in time for the big debate on demobilisation and resettlement, which Members on all sides were hoping would provide them with reasoned and pacificatory answers to the frightening influx of letters from Servicemen anxious about their civilian jobs, their careers, and the working of age-plus-length-of-service generally. The sunlight streamed down on the Minister of Labour, who sat immobile with folded arms, a massive Buddha, betraying no spark of interest in a preliminary skirmish—Hudson's announcement of slight concessions to Land Army girls, which three women Members at once rejected with scorn and contumely.

The House was, however, in a good mood. It had just roared at one of Mr. Churchill's best jokes—his expectation that Himmler would "turn up somewhere, in this world or the next, and be dealt with by the appropriate local authorities." It had not prodded him when he was extremely cagey about the Germans now apparently in high office in Germany under Allied Command. It had been less kind to George Hall, the unfortunate Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who had, in the absence of both Eden and Law, to deal with such tricky questions as the delimitation of the occupation zones in Austria and the situation in Syria and the Lebanon.

On Tuesday there was a portentously dull debate on the committee stage of the Income Tax Bill; and Hugh Molson raised on the adjournment two important housing issues—high building costs and the necessity of early release from the Forces of surveyors and other technicians. Molson, despite his forbidding manner, is one of the most hard-working and informed of the younger Tory back-benchers.

Pontifex Minor

FROM WARFARE TO WORK

At St. Paul's our *Te Deum* has been sung; at St. Stephen's, with impressive solemnity, the nation's spokesmen have given thanks for a victory as complete as any in history; and now it is the long task of making Europe once more a habitable Continent that faces us. The hardest of our problems confronts us in Germany, for there we have to cope not merely with material ruin, but with psychological complications as much in our own minds as in those of the vanquished nation. The formula of "a stern military government", enunciated crudely by General Clay, does not carry us far.

The first question that arises is whether the four chief Allies will contrive to establish, in Berlin or elsewhere, an effective joint control over the whole area their armies occupy. Each army, so far, has taken its own measures and made its own plans in isolation. The Russians operate under a complete blackout; they admit no foreign journalists and we doubt whether Whitehall knows much more of what they are doing than the man in the street. No effort can be too great to clear away the mutual distrust that accounts for this lack of co-operation. For if, during an occupation which may be prolonged, each Ally governs his own zone on plans of his own, the result will be the Balkanisation of Central Europe.

There are other urgent questions related to the zones of occupation that call for a prompt decision. Fugitives from the Russian zone, who may number several millions, have fled, some to Denmark and others to the British and American zones. What is to be their fate? If they remain where they are, they will aggravate the congestion in the devastated cities and add to the difficulty of finding food and work. But are the Russians prepared to take them back? Again, it was from these eastern provinces, which the Russians occupy, overwhelmingly agricultural as they are, that the industrial regions of Western and Central Germany drew a great part of their food supplies. Will these now be cut off? These two problems—the redistribution of the scattered population and the allocation of the food supply—can be solved only by a Joint Control of all the Occupying Powers.

There are all-important questions of another order, political, cultural and psychological, that will call for all our attention. Many industrial towns are destroyed to the extent of 75 per cent., and what remains of their populations is living in air-raid shelters and cellars. The German official estimate that 25 million persons are homeless, whether as refugees or as victims of bombardment, may not be far from the truth. Small towns, however, are often and villages usually intact. Some time will pass before the first essentials of urban civilisation, water, gas and electricity, can be restored to the towns. Communications, whether by road, rail or water, are almost non-existent. Industry with rare exceptions is at a standstill; for where the machinery is intact, there may be neither power, transport nor raw materials. Such work as there is depends chiefly on our armies. On the land the farmers, who had relied for years on foreign slaves, are now without labour.

There are reserves of food which may suffice for some weeks: thereafter the lives of this population will depend on the efficiency and humanity of the victors. Our aim must be to help Germany recover a sense of ethical values and the civic conscience the Nazis sedulously destroyed. That will not happen, if life becomes a struggle among workless millions for crusts of bread. This nation can recover its lost morale only by hard work. It will have to face the duty of restoring what the Nazis have ruined in all the countries they over-ran, but this it cannot do without food and shelter. The only sound policy is that the rebuilding of Europe should be planned as a whole. If the German worker has to toil to restore the wreckage in Russia, he must be allowed to spend some of his time and strength on rebuilding his own home.

The importation of food will be necessary, as the Americans realise, but the scale they contemplate, a ration of 1,150 calories, is too meagre. That allowance may just suffice to sustain life, but not to repair the wastage of work: our own allowance of rationed food is 2,500 calories. The result of an inadequate ration is always to set the Black Market booming; and that means chaos, demoralisation and inflation. Even more essential is it to restart normal work, in industry and on the land, as promptly as possible. The lesson of the grim years after the last war is that the peasant will not raise food or part with it, unless there are goods in the shops he can buy. To improvise some mechanism of credit and exchange, so that raw materials can be made available, may be as urgent a necessity as the importation of food. The Weimar Republic started its career under the worst auspices, largely because the prolonged ban on the import of raw materials cursed it with mass unemployment.

The other half of the problem, the provision of labour, is relatively simple. It would be folly to keep much longer in their "cages" the six million prisoners of war who are now under Allied guard. The land-workers, miners and builders should be released first. Only the S.S. men and any others who can be classified as active Nazis should be retained. For them a long-range programme must be thought out. The same considerations apply to the prisoners in this country. Apart from those we propose to employ on work in our own devastated areas and the inveterate Nazis whom it would be folly to release, is anything to be gained, by keeping this vast potential labour force in idleness?

Yet another urgent problem confronts us. What is the status of Admiral Dönitz and his colleagues, who offer us their services as a subordinate government of the Reich? According to Shaef, Dönitz is under arrest; but the Prime Minister speaks of "Allied directions" to Germans who "will administer their country." It is intelligible and convenient that the Generals and Admirals among them should be used to facilitate the demobilisation of an army and fleet that have ceased to exist as military forces. But Marshal von Busch in his proclamations from Flensburg radio went much further, since he claimed the obedience of the civil authorities as well as the soldiers; while Freiherr Schwerin von Krosigk, in his perfect Balliol accent, was allowed to pose as Foreign Minister in a broadcast interview. If the conspiracy of last July had succeeded in overthrowing Hitler, there might possibly have been a case for recognising its civilian leaders, who were a genuine Opposition, as a provisional government. But the only claim of Dönitz to leadership is that Hitler nominated him as his successor; while his avowed policy from first to last, has been to widen the breach between us and the Russians. To make any use of this man or his colleagues, save for the limited purpose of disbanding the armed forces, would be the gravest folly we could commit. All German Generals and Admirals should be prisoners of war and accorded no special privileges. The "fraternisation" with Göring was a gross lapse which General Eisenhower has suitably rebuked, but these ambiguous dealings with the Flensburg team strike us as even more perilous. It is using the facilities we give it to preserve the prestige of the Reichswehr. Some experienced German civil servants we may have to employ as subordinate experts, but to allow the dead hand of Hitler to nominate them would be an unpardonable naivete. The future government of Germany will have to be built up from the bottom, first in the cities and then in the provinces, but it must not include men with Nazi records or members of the International Trade Union of Generals.

PROBLEMS FOR BLACKPOOL

THE delegates who will assemble on Monday in the Empress Ballroom at Blackpool will have before them the Labour Party Executive's draft of the Party's election programme. It is a well-written, simply worded document, embodying a clear, limited policy of immediate objectives. They are stated with a sense of urgency that augurs well for the Party's determination to carry them into effect.

They are, however, strictly limited objectives, particularly in the field of public ownership. The leaders of the Party propose to restrict nationalisation to a few essential industries and services which occupy key positions in the national economy. Fuel and power, inland transport, iron and steel, and the Bank of England together cover the field over which the remedy of public ownership is to be applied. The joint stock banks are to be controlled but not taken over; in the case of land, no more than stronger planning powers and easier acquisition of land for public use are proposed for the present. The big trade monopolies and cartels, except within the field marked out for public ownership, are to be dealt with by regulation involving the prohibition of restrictive practices and agreements and the control of prices. Stress is laid on the need for measures both to develop the export trade and to ensure correct allocation of priorities in the use of scarce materials for the home market. Public supervision of large-scale industry is envisaged as the way, for the present, of securing a right distribution of industry, in conjunction with a limited nationalisation designed both to promote higher efficiency and to enable the Government to pursue successfully an active policy of full employment.

On the international side, the policy laid down in the draft programme, which was drawn up before the collapse of Nazi resistance, is much less definite. It gives no hint of the treatment proposed for post-war Germany, beyond insisting that Germany and Japan must be deprived of the means of again preparing war. It insists on the need for consolidating in peace "the great wartime association of the British Commonwealth with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R." It does not appear to envisage any closer partnership with Socialist than with non-Socialist countries in the post-war world; nor does it advance beyond mere generalities in urging the vital need for international collaboration to promote the welfare of the peoples of the world. To India it offers only "advancement to responsible self-government," whatever that may mean, and to the British Colonies, even more vaguely, "planned progress."

In part these vaguenesses are no doubt an indication that the leaders of the Labour Party expect the coming Election to turn much more on home than on foreign affairs. But, even so, the Conference can hardly afford to leave this side of Labour policy so indeterminate. British Socialism must formulate a clear foreign policy of its own, and stand ready to give a lead to the renascent forms of European Socialism and to help the Socialist movements of Europe both to conquer power in their own countries and to join hands in a policy based on accommodation between the Communist and Social Democratic groups in every country. The Trade Unions plainly realise this need: hence the efforts they have been making through the World Trade Union Conference. It is to be hoped that the delegates at Blackpool will show that they realise it, too, and are determined not merely to prevent Germany from further war-making, but also to set about building on essentially Socialist foundations a new Europe in which the great resources of Germany will be made available for raising standards of living throughout the Continent.

Not least interesting is the closing section of the draft, which comes down to the immediate electoral issues. The gist of its argument is that, in effect, the choice of the electors is between Tory and Labour; for the only third alternative is a situation of "instability and confusion," in which there would be no Parliamentary majority for any major issue. "We respect," say the draftsmen, "the views of those progressive Liberals and others who would wish to support one or other of the smaller Parties of their choice." But these "respected" electors are urged to vote Labour, for fear of helping the Tories or producing a situation of stalemate. The difficulty about this argument is that it is two-edged. There is everything to be said against "splitting the progressive vote"; but does it really follow that all progressives in all constituencies should feel the call to vote Labour, irrespective of the likeliest way of winning the seat? Would it not be more logical to conclude that each seat should be fought by the "progressive" candidate—Labour, Communist, Common Wealth, or Liberal—who stands the best chance of winning? The leaders of the Labour Party would presumably repudiate this conclusion on the ground that only a one-Party majority can yield a strong enough Government to meet the need of the times. But what is to be said if a one-Party majority is not likely, but a "progressive" majority, with some give and take, could be more easily won? It is significant that a considerable number of the big Trade Unions, including the Miners and the Engineers, have already declared in favour of an attempt to constitute a united democratic front; and St. Pancras Labour Party is promoting a preliminary discussion among delegates who support agreement.

The plain fact is that for the sake of this country and of the whole world everything that can possibly be done should be done to avoid the return of the Conservatives to power. Even if Labour's international policy is ill-defined, it is, at any rate, infinitely better than anything the Tories are likely to do; and in home affairs, where Labour objectives are clear and sound, the Tories offer hardly more than the sheer negative of a speedy removal of controls, coupled with a whittling down as much as they dare of the promised reforms in the health services, in social insurance, and even in education. If the Tories get in, there will be no national plan for industry, no control of monopolists, no real town or country planning, no national health service; and housing will be allowed to become the prey of speculative financiers operating under the banner of private enterprise. Internationally, the Tories are heading already for a quarrel with the Soviet Union—the greatest disaster that could befall this country, and one which, in economic matters, would reduce it to the role of a mere satellite of United States high finance. It is to be hoped that the delegates at Blackpool will realise the magnitude of what is at stake, and will not stultify their leaders' excellent statement of domestic policy either by vagueness about international affairs or by sticking electorally on points of punctilio which may cost the progressive forces far more seats than they can afford to lose.

AMERICAN OPINION

YESTERDAY, in Chicago, a man whom I had never seen before and should not know again, asked, when he knew I was English, "Say, shall we soon be having trouble with your buddy, Joe Stalin?" I have been asked that question in many forms all across the American continent, but the form of it, putting Britain and Russia together, is peculiarly the product of Colonel MacCormick's *Chicago Tribune*. Fear of Russia is common, and in the Patterson, MacCormick and Hearst press, and the utterances of the American Navy Department, audibly discussing a future war against Russia, the U.S.S.R. could find justification for at least equal fear of America.

It should be noted that the Polish issue as such does not touch American opinion with any of the sharpness that is felt in Britain, which has an uncomfortable conscience about Poland. America did not enter the war on account of Poland. Stalin's rebuke to Churchill interests the public less than Eisenhower's rebuke to Kennedy of the Associated Press, for a breach of journalistic trust on VE-day, or his rebuke to American Generals for fraternising with German officers. Poles do not matter much here except when an election is close, and Americans now take for granted that much of Europe will be under Soviet influence. They are more alarmed about Russia's Asiatic policy, which I must discuss another week. Moreover, all anti-Soviet stories are discounted by a large section of the American population because they have so long been the stock-in-trade of reaction. For each man here who talks to me about Poland, another stresses the wrong that was done in accepting Fascist Argentina into San Francisco's organisation. Russia's tough methods and Argentina's entry are put side by side as blots on the Conference. The anti-Soviet feeling is based not on Poland but on a vague feeling about Communism, on businessmen's alarm that Russia will get stronger, while America will probably have another depression, and on the dawning Imperialism of a great Power which discovers as it comes out of isolation that another great and growing Power is also in the field, and may some day be in the way. Informed opinion is by no means sure that the Russians are wholly to blame. Walter Lippmann suggests that it might be well if all the documents about Poland were published. "Almost certainly those documents would dispose of the impression that the unfulfilled Yalta Agreement on Poland poses a simple issue of black and white, or right and wrong, between the Soviet Union on the one hand, and the Anglo-Americans on the other." Lippmann would not say that without some knowledge of political manœuvres of which the public is unaware.

Lippmann also blames Stettinius and his colleagues for allowing themselves to get into the position of having come forward "as the champions of a Latin-American bloc as against Continental Europe and the Soviet Union." He should add that America's policy over Argentina is very dubious from other points of view. Argentina may well take the lead in organising the South American republics against the United States. She has won great prestige as a Fascist leader, anti-democratic as well as anti-Soviet, and in seeking to create an anti-Soviet bloc in the American hemisphere Stettinius is already discovering that he has called into being a monster which he may not be able to control.

The Conference itself is like a ship that has drifted into the shallows, and staggers about from one tack to another, hitting rocks with every puff of wind. The big figures have left to attend to the realities of their problems and disputes, leaving their deputies to discover mitigating formulas, which will not, in fact, relieve the anxieties of the public. Russia, reverting to the role that might have been expected of her, has now exposed the hollow pretences of trusteeship, and suggested that all Colonial peoples should be under the trustee authority, and that the United States is seeking to fortify islands, not against Japan, but against Russia. The British also disapprove of the American pretence about the Pacific islands. If America wants to annex strategic islands, Britain does not object. We have many such bases ourselves. But, say the British, if annexation and military secrecy are what Americans want, why not say so instead of trying, for the sake of American opinion which dislikes the idea of Imperialism, to call these annexations "trusteeships" which are not to be subject to the trustee authority?

Again, the American desire to fit Chapultepec into the framework of the Security Council can only produce hypocrisy. No formula can reconcile this extension of the Monroe Doctrine with a World organisation having a central authority pledged to stop war. If regional action against aggression can take place without the prior consideration and consent of the Security Council, then its authority is gone, whatever the nominal safeguards. In point of fact, Chapultepec, the annexation of strategic islands, the Churchillian

refusal to modify Britain's Imperial attitude in Asia and Africa, and Russia's determination to settle all Eastern and South-Eastern European problems unilaterally for her own security, are all examples of the same thing. While making the Charter, every Power is seeking to find in some "bloc" or other a personal policy of reinsurance.

Some people ask whether Britain should not also seek insurance in a new Western European bloc. The prospect would be better if the condition of France were less ambiguous and miserable. The French have not decided whether they are the greatest of the small Powers or the least of the great. In fact, the French delegation has played little or no part at all. Violently at odds amongst themselves and all subservient to de Gaulle, they have been rendered quite impotent by constant and contradictory telegrams from their master in Paris.

In spite of the obvious disagreements among the Great Powers, almost all Americans sincerely and urgently want a Charter to emerge from San Francisco. They argue with force that a Charter will be something to hold on to, an anchor on which at any rate argument can ride and to which some day perhaps something more solid can be attached. Without it, anarchy will be naked and unashamed, and Liberals will have no basis at all from which to struggle against great armaments, the open pursuit of power and preparation for a war between America and Russia, which they all agree would mean final destruction. They feel that to fail to sign a joint Charter would be finally to reject what Mr. Eden has rightly called "the last chance." Americans believe more than the British do in declarations and written constitutions; they recall the difficulties of agreeing upon their own federal constitution and the long struggles to make it work. Yet somehow it has served them in spite of the despairing cry of Chief Justice Marshall that the constitution he had done so much to form could not in any circumstances be made to work. If after many storms this San Francisco Charter cannot somehow be made a reality in practice, the result, they see, can only be another short period of uneasy power politics with vast and ever more devastating armaments and another even greater world catastrophe. If it is bad, then it can with patience and statesmanship be made better. If there is no faith among the signatories, that, too, may come if the effort to co-operate on a simple basis of self-interest remains. I feel this American Liberal case for the San Francisco Charter is the best defence I have heard, and I find it difficult to answer.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

A LONDON DIARY

We began with a phoney war; we return to a phoney peace, or peace on the instalment plan. We have just come out of prison and stand twitching like convicts and blinking in the sunlight; the group or communal life of the war has been very like prison life. We look secretly for private life again; secretly because there is a new guilt, the Far East guilt, which rather resembles the shame one felt after the flying bomb had passed.

* * *

Tommy Handley, the national philosopher, at once summed up the first bewilderment of the peace: "Don't you know there's a war off." (I hear that one party of Londoners, with tortuous impulses, lit their bonfire and then put it out with stirrup pumps.) For everyone the last year of the war was intolerable in the pressure of its hopes, the vivid anxiety of its climaxes and the consuming weariness of its waiting; yet I confess to feeling a momentary panic when Victory came. Better the devil you know . . . In this mood one forgets the frustrations, the incompetences, the low standards of wartime life. One forgets the appalling committees that surrounded one, their dull majorities preventing every move, the urgent telephone calls that led to weeks of inertia, the ideas that cancelled out, the airless corridors, the B.O. and stale cigarette smoke of Ministries. One was working for groups and the standards of groups sag lower and lower with every interview. I speak of my own profession. The most futile type of propaganda of the written or spoken kind, I am convinced, was the kind directed at public morale; its lies were the worst kind of lie: the boring lie. This propaganda only became good when it took the form of public education, and I hope this kind will not die with the war. I think the most dispiriting hours of the war were those I passed in dirty, crowded, provincial hotels, where scores of bald-headed, underfed, bored men like myself mooched about with folders in our hands. Occasionally a drunk, many-times-torpedoed seaman would enliven us. Or there would be some flash back to the past. After an air raid I remember an icy old lady came from the shelter with her stiff, austere, monosyllabic maid.

"A most disagreeable experience, Henley," said the old lady.

"Yes, m'lady."

"I hope they will not return."

"No, m'lady."

How had they wandered into this world of seamen, commercials, and civil servants?

* * *

What has the war done to me? It will be years before I can answer. It has, however, answered one question that has preyed on my mind since I was a schoolboy in the last war: had I physical courage? Some, not much; but neither am I very cowardly. I discover I am a repressed gambler. I believe all my generation were infected with the gambler's need for excitement, by our position as spectators in the last war. I was cured of a number of fantasies by a short visit to the front; well, if not cured, half-cured. That is as much as one can expect. I have learned to lie down very flat on the earth—an important moment in one's life, though I suspect such incidents; they appeal too much to one's sense of theatre. It has been a great strain not telling lies about them afterwards. The most ludicrous and humiliating thing that occurred to me happened in a German town. My companions were looting. They entered the building carrying rifles and revolvers because they were afraid of snipers, but as their fever grew, they could not be bothered by their arms. So they hung them on me. I became a kind of coat stand hung with deadly weapons, a sort of one-man armoury. I felt very powerful, dangerous and silly. A patrol passed and gazed speechlessly. "Hiya," I said. "Hiya," they murmured. It was an unconvincing scene. In a few years' time when I'm feeling less precise, perhaps I shall improve it. The only brave thing I have done in this war is to climb up the rope ladder of an aircraft-carrier at sea, wearing a trilby hat. Half way up, one is horizontal. And it is a terrible long way.

* * *

The one gain of the war for me is that it has shown me my own country and especially its industrial towns and the workers in them. For me this has been valuable enlargement of my interests. I think some writers benefit by this kind of experience: in our industrial life I cannot imagine anything more fascinating and suggestive for them than the working of mines and shipyards. My own regret is that one went to them under official auspices. I urge the industrial leaders and their trades unions to continue facilities to writers and painters on a more modest and less limited scale, not for the purposes of advertising, propaganda or journalism, but in the ultimate hope that something may come out of it that will mend the fissure in our culture. I urge the employers and the unions to come out of their ivory factory.

* * *

I thought Mr. J. B. Priestley's postscript last Friday was an excellent recapitulation of six years of public feeling about the war, chiefly because it collected many of the cinematic images which are jumping by, at present, in our minds. One of his truisms—"We are all feeling older," was not the bromide that, at first, it seemed to be. It was a sharp piece of observation. It is a phrase I have heard repeatedly from men and women who were 25 years old and over at the beginning of the war, and it is especially strange on the lips of the young. I suspect that an attempt to start a cult of youth such as was started after the last war will fail. Wyndham Lewis, that very imaginative if theatrical observer of our society, knocked the cult finally on the head in his *Doom of Youth*, when he treated it as a huge social and political conspiracy. I foresee a cult of middle age like the one which animated the Victorians during their period of greatest seriousness and energy—indeed it had already begun in the middle thirties, for war merely confirms and publicises the revolutions that have already occurred. The youth cult of the twenties was mysterious in its derivations. It was an important tributary of Fascism. It was an old man's movement. Its relation to Fascism was something like Hugenberg's or Thyssen's.

* * *

After the phoney period has passed the new kind of peace is going to be as strange as the new kind of war was in 1940. One major cause is obvious: air warfare and the rocket have made Britain a continental country. An organisation like Civil Defence with its courses, training, group life and incursions into individual freedom will become in some degree permanent in our life. What will this mean? Mr. Stephen Spender has enlarged on this in a thoughtful, original book *Civil Defence and After* (Adprint-Harrap, 15s). It is a model of the kind of thing that ought to be written about war-time jobs, in which all classes of men and women had to work together; most important, it will interest, instruct, and waken the curiosity of the people with whom he served, for it is written in the spirit of inquiry. Spender describes how Civil Defence was organised, what it did in the raids, how it painfully got through the lulls, and, more important, has added refreshing general remarks on war, peace, citizenship, the education of the masses, the profit and loss of group life, and the illusions about popular art. And he has done this in the most stimulating way. This must be the first semi-official publication to contain an author's poems as well as his statistics. His definition of social realism: "Caliban admiring itself in the mirror" is adapted from Oscar Wilde with point in a book of this kind. The insouciance of Mr. Spender as he goes *au fond* at the Fire Stations, has turned out to be very rewarding. Another book I must mention, is one that ought to be in the hands of all those who have gone or think of going to see the pictures of Buchenwald. It is a pamphlet by Victor Gollancz: *What Buchenwald Really Means*. Price 3d. It answers the view that all Germans are collectively responsible for these atrocities despite the fact that large numbers of the victims were themselves Germans.

* * *

I live in a neighbourhood that is inhabited mainly by horses. Owing to the shortage of feeding stuffs, servants to look after them and so on, their numbers appeared to dwindle and those that remained seemed like fantastic relics of a dying species. On VE-Day one of our local horses came snorting up to me in the train and said: "A damn good thing it's over. Now we we can get rid of the damned B.B.C., all these damned orders, all these damned regulations and these damn foreigners, Dutch, French, Greeks, the whole damn lot. Send the Jews back to Palestine, the Americans back to America, the Italians back to Italy. They've been the ruin of this damn country, filling it with half-caste Negro babies. It will take us two generations to recover from it, and unless we put some discipline into people, this poor old country will sink to the level of the damn Portuguese." At which she cantered off. Quite a number of the damned horses in my part of the country think like this. What have all these foreigners done

for us (they ask) that they should now eat our food? One of the repressed emotions of the war: Xenophobia is about to be released like poison gas.

* * *

This encounter brings back to my mind an incident that occurred when I was visiting a Polish ship two years ago. We were talking about literature and I asked the Captain whether he admired the works of Joseph Conrad. The Captain stiffened, went pale and glared at me. The other officers stiffened too and one said curtly, "That name is never mentioned on a Polish ship, sir." And then the doctor who spoke better English than the others, slowly smiled and said: "I am sorry. There has been a misunderstanding. The Captain thought you said "Joseph, Comrade."

V. S. PRITCHETT

PLANTING THE FLAG

If the march of Marshal Tito
Calls for multilateral veto
As he occupies Trieste,
Tito's grab is not the last one,
Athens too has pulled a fast one,
Both provide an acid test.

If the Marshal's reprehended,
Can the Regent be defended
On the selfsame moral grounds?
Is not Damaskinos, skipping
Round the Isles in Allied shipping,
Similarly out of bounds?

Is the Patriarch's mission solely
Non-political and holy,
In his outer diocese?
Is it out of zeal religious
He steams off with speed prodigious,
Planting out the flags of Greece?

While in San Francisco's labours
Good, bad and indifferent neighbours
Frame the coming rule of law,
Lest worse cleavage yawn between us,
Should we not ask Damaskinos,
Like the Marshal, to withdraw?

San Francisco's draft preamble,
Bans the territorial scramble;
Victors must not jump a claim.
Now before more discords flame up
Powers must strive to fit the frame-up
In the San Francisco frame.

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to H. L. Mitchell.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

It has long been a saying that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton. Would it be too much to say that the battles of Europe were won on the greyhound tracks of Britain?—*Greyhound Express.*

Thieves have been taking flowers from many of the newly-planted flower-beds in Wandsworth. "It is beyond my comprehension," said Councillor Alexander, "that people who are fighting for liberty and justice can do such a thing. They must have German blood in them."—*Wandsworth Borough News.*

Mrs. Harriet Gilson, of Chiswick, fainted in the blazing sunshine on Ludgate Hill just before the King's carriage was due.

She said as she recovered: "The same thing happened at the Coronation, and I missed the King by a minute. It seems that every time I nearly see the King I faint."—*Daily Express.*

THE PROBLEM OF TRIESTE

[We are glad to afford space to a communication which we have received from Professor Salvemini, who expresses, with marked moderation, the views of a distinguished Italian Progressive on the future of Trieste.]

THIS is a small problem. But it is a test case of the method by which larger analogous difficulties will be calmed, or envenomed and World War Three made unavoidable, within the next five years. Neither Trieste nor Istria nor any other land in Europe is a captive to be sold on the slave market. These lands are inhabited by human beings whose personal and political rights have to be respected, and among their political rights is the right of free national development.

People go about saying "Italy needs Trieste and Istria," or "Yugoslavia needs Trieste and Istria." But what about the Italians and Slavs who live there? Among them are men and women who feel themselves to be Italians, and men and women who feel themselves to be Slavs. Neither Italy nor Yugoslavia, but the Italians and Slavs who have been there for centuries, must solve the problem. Every individual has the right to speak the language he wishes and to give names in his own tongue to himself, his family and the places where he lives and which are dear to him.

If we follow this principle in solving the problem of Trieste and Istria, we must begin by admitting without hesitation that the population of Eastern Istria is compactly Slav and therefore should, according to its will and right, join with Yugoslavia.

Then the problem of Western Istria and Trieste would remain. This is a territory in which Italians and Slavs are indissolubly intermingled. Here is a local case of the problems existing in all multi-national territories from the Baltic to the Adriatic and the Aegean Seas. The Italians are concentrated in the cities where they often form the overwhelming majority. (According to the 1943 *Statesman's Year Book*, Trieste had 261,000 inhabitants; Gorizia, 49,000; Pola, 46,000; Monfalcone, 18,000; Pirano, 19,000; Capodistria, 13,000; Pavenzo, 12,000; Dignano, 11,000; Rovigno, 10,000; etc.). The Slavs are mostly scattered in small nuclei over a stony and sparsely inhabited countryside, and have filtered into the cities. Can any man of common sense and good faith demand that the Slavs control the city of Trieste or those of Western Istria? If they intend to dislodge the Italian inhabitants, they should say so.

The American experts who, in 1919, on behalf of President Wilson, traced what would have been the most suitable frontier between Italy and Yugoslavia, were not moved by any pro-Italian bias. They drew a line almost perfectly coinciding with that which divides mixed Italo-Slav territory from purely Slav territory. They took into account not only statistics but social conditions. They thought that the solution most conducive to peace, *provided the rights of national minorities were respected*, was to establish Italian rule over that mixed territory. The Wilson Line of 1919 might be slightly improved in favour of the Slavs, on the principle that the fewer Slavs left with the Italians, the better. But on the whole, the Wilson frontier would be the optimum, *provided that the personal rights and political rights of the Slav minority were respected* by the Italians and provided the Slavs respected the rights of the Italian minority placed within their jurisdiction.

Unfortunately, the treatment of the Slavs by the Fascists for more than twenty years was infamous. The Italians are not to be trusted when they say that they will not do it any more. But do the Slavs deserve to be more trusted than the Italians? What did the Serbs do in Macedonia after their victories of 1912? What did the Croat Fascists do against Serbs and Mohammedans in recent years? What did Serb Fascists do against Croats? Were King Alexander, Stoyadinovič or Palevič better than Mussolini? The history of all mixed territories in Europe, if one excepts Switzerland, is one of hatreds and brutality. Must the process continue in reverse? Would two blacks make a white? Will there never be an end to crimes and reprisals?

In all mixed territories some external force must come in to protect minorities against majorities and to enforce peace and justice until the time comes when men and women learn that decency pays best.

Elsewhere George La Piana and I endeavoured to outline the four conditions under which the problem of the intermingled Italians and Slavs of Venetia Giulia should be solved:

(1) The largest possible home rule should be granted to each municipality so as to leave the Slavs free to run their rural communities, and the Italians their town and cities; (2) in the municipalities where Italians and Slavs are intermingled, each group should be allowed to keep its own schools, paying the school tax to a school board of its own so that there would be two different schools boards in the same municipality, and no Slav would be forced to support Italian schools with his money, or *vice versa*; (3) the whole territory should be administered by two different provincial boards for those affairs which can be divided between two boards; for those affairs in which such division is not feasible (such as building and maintenance of main roads, sanitation services, etc.) the administration should be entrusted to a joint committee consisting of an equal number of members delegated by each of the two provincial boards; (4) a body of umpires chosen by the Hague Court of International Justice should be assigned to settle disputes on the spot, according to common sense.

The administrative system which would solve the problem of peaceful Italo-Slav coexistence in Venetia Giulia, would solve the same problem for the City of Fiume, the City of Zara, and the small Italian nuclei which are scattered along the coast of Dalmatia.

The *economic* problem of the *port* of Trieste has nothing to do with the *national* problem of the *city* of Trieste and that of Western Istria. One could give a perfect solution to the former and a bad one to the latter, and *vice versa*.

The economic problem of the port of Trieste cannot be solved either within the port itself, or within Yugoslavia, or within Italy. The port serves a Central European Hinterland. Its problem is not simply one of local facilities, but above all of customs, tariffs and railway rates in Central Europe. The key to the local economic problem has to be sought in the arrangements to be made for Constanza, Salonika, Fiume, Venice, Genoa, Amsterdam, Hamburg and Danzig—for all ports of which Central Europe is the hinterland. If they endeavour to kill one another by cut-throat competition, the weaker will go to the wall whatever its political régime.

Trieste port cannot be exclusively either Italian or Yugoslav. It is international and should work under international management. Italian, Yugoslav, Austrian and Czechoslovak delegates and representatives from all countries which have a sufficient amount of business in the port should form the managing corporation.

Were Yugoslavs and Italians reasonable, they should agree to entrust a Commission of Arbitration with the task of tracing the new boundary between Italy and Yugoslavia and devising measures to protect national minorities through supernational supervision. I am pretty sure that any arbitration that balances all factors in the case would allot Trieste and Western Istria territorially to Italy. But even if it allotted them to the Slavs, Italians should bow before it, and the Slavs should do the same if it ran against their desires. Italian and Slavs would then set a splendid example to all peoples intoxicated by hatred and greed.

GAETANO SALVEMINI

HUNGER

[This story appeared in the Dutch clandestine paper *Het Parool*. The author is unknown.]

After Fien had closed the door behind her and they had heard her old woman's tread laboriously going up the stairs, Juffrouw Wolsma turned to her husband and said: "There you are, nine o'clock, and she's off again."

The man, scarcely visible in the pale glimmer of light which came from the almost burned out candle, shrugged his shoulders. "She is only gone to get a drop of water," he said.

"That's what she says," hissed Juffrouw Wolsma, whispering conspiratorially, "but I tell you, she's got something to eat up in her room. She's eating."

"What could she have to eat?" the man spoke, trying to pacify. "You have her ration card. She always eats with us, doesn't she? She can't have any stores left, you can be sure of that. After all, Fien isn't an ordinary lodger. We've known her for thirty years. She's in and out all day."

"Of course, what do you expect?" her voice was scornful, "she comes here because I warm up the scraps, because there's still a bit of fire left. And light."

"That you mean?" the man asked, with a nod in the direction of the candle, but the woman, whose voice was shrill and quivering with hate, cried: "I tell you, she eats up there. Every evening at nine. A drink of water, pah, you make me laugh! No—that fine friend of ours, whom we've known for thirty years, keeps back titbits for herself and sits up there guzzling them, while we sit here and starve." And when the man shrugged his shoulders, she flung out at him: "So you don't believe it? All right then, go upstairs and see for yourself."

He looked at her thin face distorted with anger and a feeling of misery came over him. "After all . . ." he began, but she was moving over to the door; she pulled it half open and whispered in a voice which was both pleading and commanding: "Go on now, Henk, I must know."

He didn't himself know why he got up and walked past his wife out of the room. To get it over? Out of pity? Or did he too, in his heart of hearts, want to know what Fien was doing up there every evening? He walked up the dark stairs on tiptoe, but half up he stood still, suddenly overcome by the feeling that he really couldn't do it. Should he go back? But then the same old row would begin all over again. Suddenly tired, he sat down on one of the stairs and put his hands over his face. How horrible everything was. The whole day it was eating, eating, always talking about eating. It began in the morning. Should we eat a piece of bread now or later? Usually Anna and he ate it all at the same time, but Fien preferred to keep hers. She began at eleven o'clock on her own. That irritated. Remarks were made. "So you've got some left, have you? Well, we'll look on." This usually from Anna and he never quite knew whether to slap her or to comfort her.

Somewhere in the distance a church-bell struck. Funny, sitting like this, on the stairs in the dark. H. J. Wolsma, town-hall clerk for thirty years, creeps up on his old friend to see if she isn't eating. . . .

It is enough to make you roar with laughter, but it isn't easy to laugh on an empty stomach. He sat there dully, imprisoned in a grey despondency. What did that man say again, the one who stood next to him in the queue for cooking oil? "If you're going to die, you might just as well die well-equipped." Well-equipped, just as if you were going camping.

But just now the thought of dying had become rather different than it used to be. It made you think of a nice sleep with a lot of blankets and not having to get up to cope with a stove which promptly swallowed up the few bits of wood, scraped together with so much difficulty with bread of which there was never enough, with meals after which one hour later you found yourself just as hungry, in short the whole pitiful torment of trying to keep alive, which wasn't worth a damn anyway.

Above him a door opened and the stairs creaked under Fien's step. She didn't notice him until she was right on top of him. "What . . . Henk, is that you?" she cried out, scared. "What on earth are you doing there?"

"Do you eat up there, Fien?" he asked heavily.

For some time there was a silence. And then timidly, her voice came out of the darkness: "Yes."

Silence.

"But you musn't do that, you know," he said kindly, as if he were correcting a child, "we're all three in the same boat."

There was no reply. Then tearfully, "I still had some gingernuts."

"Oh," he said indifferently. The absurd confession left him cold. He only knew that Fien was sitting on the stairs too, three steps up from where he was sitting and it struck him as ridiculous. But he couldn't laugh.

Down below the door creaked. Anna.

"Henk," she whispered.

"Yes," he said.

"Did you see? What's she eating?"

The thin small voice of Fien said, almost sadly: "It was gingernuts. I ought not to have done it. It was very wicked."

"Oh," said Anna, shocked. The man noticed that there was no trace of triumph in her voice.

"Let's go," he said with an attempt at cheerfulness. "Let's go down to our blazing hearth or is Anna coming to sit on the stairs too?" He got up and came down, suddenly strangely shy. Fien went up to her room. Ashamed perhaps. But a little later she came down too with a small bag in her hand.

"Here," she said. "There are still three left. But that's all, really."

They each took one and slowly began to eat.

AN EMBARRASSMENT OF RICHES

This week the National Gallery restores to us a first instalment of its treasures. And the first fruits of victory are further made visible in some exhibitions of the first importance. The Wildenstein Gallery is showing in aid of the Airborne Forces Security Fund a second exhibition of English and French landscapes. The first ran from Constable to Cézanne, the second goes from Van Gogh to Graham Sutherland. The quality of the works chosen by Mr. Derek Hill again reveals the fineness of this young artist's eye. I must regret the inclusion of a hugely empty canvas by McEvoy, still more the absence of any outstanding *fauve* landscape and of any work by Frances Hodgkins. But there are exemplary specimens of Bonnard, the early Derain, Ensor, Greaves, Spencer Gore, Grant, Hitchens, Innes, John, Matisse, Paul Nash, William Nicholson, Pasmore, Lucien Pissarro, Segonzac, Sickert, Signac, Matthew Smith, Soutine, Steer (one of those Walberswick pictures which are his best), Utrillo, Vuillard and Whistler. The contrast in general approach with the earlier exhibition is significant. A Constable and a Sisley seem to ask, "Do you realise how beautiful the light makes this scene?"; a Matisse and a Hitchens to proclaim, "See what I can make of this scene." The artist, that is to say, has become more subjective, more wilful, and more idiosyncratic. Instead of unveiling a subject he cares only to construct an object. But one is little tempted to balance the resulting gains and losses, when faced with such exquisite and masterly works as, for instance, the Vuillard (my personal pick from the whole show), the Bonnards, the Utrillo, the Picasso and the Matisse glade. One just surrenders to enjoyment. I must call special attention also to the romantic landscape by a forgotten painter, Cecil Lawson, a follower of Constable, which has been very happily hung next a splendid Sutherland. Cannot we see more of his work?

Then there is another treat—a handsome anthology of paintings of the School of Paris, shown at the Lefevre in aid of the British Committee for Polish Welfare. (Open till 5 p.m. on all weekdays and on Sundays from 2 to 5. Entrance 2s. 6d., but for students and artists 1s., or even gratis.) Dufy, Gris, Matisse, Miro, Modigliani, Rouault, Soutine, and Utrillo are among the painters admirably represented. Indeed most of the exhibits are worth careful study. But I would draw special attention to a Picasso of 1903, another of 1905 and another, *Deux Têtes*, of 1926, because these are of sorts rarely seen; and then to the uncommonly fine Braques, to the Bonnard Still Life and portrait and to the Vuillard *Conversation sous la lampe*. Devastated by years of mounting destruction and wickedness, we feel, I think, a particular need for such art as by its expression of serenity and happiness reminds us that life can be worth living, that women and flowers and food can be a pleasure to look at, that stoicism is as odious and temporary a need as fire-watching, that man has diurnally evolved from the amœba not to invent flame-throwers but to blossom in a Fauré, a Mallarmé and a Matisse. In our weariness and our need to reconstruct we must be careful not to lose that sense of quality which savages sometimes possess but which no civilisation can be without. The alliance of this sense with vitality and individual genius is what the artists of the Paris school so beautifully demonstrate.

Then at the Leicester Galleries there is a second instalment of works from Sir Hugh Walpole's collection—comparable in its treasures to an Elizabethan helicon. The little Renoirs, the Sickert *Blackbird of Paradise* (one of his supreme achievements), the Braques and Picassos and Klees—note specially Klee's *Red House*, the Guercino and Tintoretto drawings. And the little Conder, too (far superior to his sugar-plum at Wildenstein's), the Grant Still Life, the Hodgkins, the Moynihan portrait of Pasmore, and a score of other small and delicate things that caught Walpole's remarkably catholic eye. Van Mastenbroek, for instance, who was he? From one little landscape, I would say a born painter.

Compared with the above, the Redfern offers us a modest bouquet; and one of the contributors, Mr. Hurry, seems to earn for his works the much abused epithet "decadent"—that is to say, a vague symbolism fails to conceal the laxity of the drawing and the emptiness of the design. But Mr. Adrian Ryan's paintings are sensuous, skilful and packed with promise. Mr. Humphrey Spender makes decorative Still Lifes with taste that is both good and personal; and the little panels by Mr. Alan Pinder have a mild naive charm. Tooth's are showing a series of watercolours by Mr. Paul Nash made with a richer palette than he has hitherto allowed himself. They are delicate and assured and poetical. I am, however, not convinced that he gains anything by leaving us uncertain whether his brush strokes are suggested by hills or clouds. Would a little more defined information detract from the poetry?

Roger Marvell

NEW CHAMBER MUSIC

Gerald Cooper Concert, May 8th: four first public performances of outstanding interest by British composers: Viola Sonata by Lennox Berkeley, String Trio by Elizabeth Lutyens, Violin Sonata by Elizabeth Maconchy, and Suite for Clarinet and Piano by Priaux Rainier. Miss Lutyens's idiom derives from Alban Berg; but this esoteric style furthers the expression of a delicate and interesting musical personality. The Trio, which dates from 1939, shows a very marked improvement on the composer's earlier work; it is succinct, fervid, and written with an assured hand. Miss Elizabeth Maconchy's Sonata is, within its limits, very competent work: the outlines are always clear and well drawn. But she seems to have very little melodic gift. This disadvantage can be concealed in an allegro, where pattern and movement, skilfully combined, can carry most of the burden. But in a slow movement it is fatal, and the Lento of this sonata performs all the gestures of eloquence without the necessary poetical content. The same objection applies, even more stringently, to Miss Priaux Rainier's Suite. This

work, which is very brilliant, very skilful and very consistent, nevertheless repeats a single lesson of Stravinsky's calamitous dogmatism. Rhythmic pattern wholly deprived of material content is as dry and tedious as the harmonic cud-chewing of so much late romantic music is nauseating and inconclusive. But whatever the expressive aim, it must be pointed out that there are other—and more interesting—intervals in the scale than the minor second and the tritone. There may be two opinions about the style affected by Miss Rainier; there can be little question of her ability to handle it. Mr. Lennox Berkeley has other virtues: his art is distinctively and individually lyrical, and he is the only one of these four composers with a gift for melody. The new Viola Sonata is his most considerable work since the Symphony. The instrumental writing, though complex and fascinating, does not always surmount the difficulty of making the viola tone amalgamate with that of the piano; but the great beauty of the material and the imaginative freedom of its treatment create a striking impression, even at a first hearing. Above all one is grateful for the pre-eminence of the melodic element in this sonata. A resolute emphasis on melody is the principal element in that re-humanisation of music which confronts all composers of to-day as the very first of their tasks. The performance of these works by the London String Trio, assisted by Denise Lassimonne, Stephen Waters and Anthony Hopkins, was very good indeed.

LIONEL CRANFIELD.

RADIO NOTES

THE Victory Programmes are with us. Ineluctible, absolutely foreseeable, they impose themselves upon us all as the Moral Law imposed itself upon Kant. To have failed to make (and presumably remake) them would have laid the B.B.C. open to the charge of irresponsibility—of callous indifference; to ignore them now would be to most listeners unthinkable; yet their existence, and the fact that we do not care to ignore them, brings home—not for the first time, but with some force—how much easier life would be if only we could take more things for granted. . . But communication between human beings is difficult, especially perhaps in England; and, in public as in private life, to leave important things unsaid is to risk misunderstanding, resentment, and the imputation of motives. So we brace ourselves—on either side, no doubt—with a regretful glance at the feast of Fauré prepared for the centenary and now presumably jettisoned. Other things—*Henry IV*, for instance—will merely have been postponed.

All the same, need the immediate prospect have been quite so austere? When the Germans were in process of losing the war, their radio poured out floods of the best German music, superbly played, and the best German poetry and drama, with a view to giving the German people a sense of their cultural achievement. (That they have systematically denied that achievement in the past ten years is not to the present purpose.) We have won this war fundamentally because our civilisation is superior to that of Germany, and I cannot but think that our celebration of that fact should have displayed rather more of our cultural heritage than could be gathered from the pages of the current *Radio Times*. The trouble, I believe, is that as a nation we have lost the sense of pageantry (no bands in the streets on VE night), and with it the ability to organise a public festival on lines that combine real emotional expression with sheer fun. I am not implying that this is the moment for indigestible quantities of Delius and Coventry Patmore; but I do suggest that if the B.B.C. had a deeper sense of its responsibilities it would have seized this opportunity to demonstrate the fact that English poetry is the finest and most varied in the world's literature, that we possess a (largely ignored) stock of magnificent and highly individual music, and that the Prime Minister's grandest pieces of eloquence have their predecessors—in the theatre as well as in Parliament. Elgar's Second Symphony is a great piece of music—but it is not enough: its solitary presence only calls attention to the absence of so many other things.

Meanwhile let it be admitted that the *ad hoc* programmes in praise of the Services have so far been done with discretion and sincerity. They were moving because they told the truth, which in this rare case happens to be simple. With one exception these broadcasts do not call for criticism, the exception being Stephen Potter's portrait of the Prime Minister. The script of this feature was quite admirable; it was cleverly selective, it was highly amusing, it built up to an impressive climax. A good deal of the performance was on a level with the script, but it contained, I think, one major error of taste: Robert Donat, to whom was entrusted the central narration, unfortunately delivered this in tones suggesting an expert salesman resolved on disposing of a particularly unreliable vacuum-cleaner. I cannot think this procedure was well advised: we did not need to be *sold* Mr. Winston Churchill at that particular moment. A little more dignity—and Mr. Donat can command dignity—would have been in place, and is quite compatible with the intimacy of the microphone. Ralph Richardson, who spoke the quotations from the Prime Minister's speeches, could scarcely have done it better. He seemed at first to be trying to avoid Mr. Churchill's manner of speaking; but the temptation alive in those famous words proved too strong. Even so, the result seemed to me just right; the imitation was too discreet to be offensive: it was a tribute to genius.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*May* 19. Symphony Concert (2.30, Vaughan Williams: Oboe Concerto).

May 20. Symphony Concert (2.30); "This is the Law: Bigamy" (6.30); *Doctor Thorne*, Episode 2 (8.30).

May 21. "What's the Point of Ceremonial?" (7.40); Fauré Piano Quintet, No. 2 (9.45).

May 22. American Heroes (6.30); "The Battle of Britain" (9.15); "A Voice from Norway" (Anthology with music, 10.40).

May 23. Symphony Concert: Music of William Walton (7.45).

May 24. Vaughan Williams: Symphony in D (7.5); Festival of Empire (8.15).

May 25. "Do Alliances Help World Peace?" (7.30); "The Tempest" (8.0); Goetz: Symphony in F (G.F.P., 4.15).

May 26. Symphony Concert (Beethoven: Third Piano Concerto: Denis Matthews, 2.30); *Pride and Prejudice* (9.15).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"Le Million," at the London Film Institute Society

"Battement de Cœur," at the Academy

"Three Caballeros," at the New Gallery

"The Suspect," at the Leicester Square

Le Million, probably the best of Clair's films, was shown to members of the London Film Institute Society on Monday, and will be given a run, I hope, somewhere in Oxford Street. (London Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, W.C.1: correspondents are always writing to me asking the address.) I say probably the best, though I have a special fondness for *Sous les Toits* myself. *Le Million* goes on, artistically speaking, where the earlier film left off. Paris chimneys, stone staircases, crooks and cops, lovers, old women in doorways, gossip on landings and under lamp-posts: this is the light-music side of gangsterdom, the *Beggar's Opera* of our time. What a rush of inspiration Clair had in those days! (1930–31, to remind us, is the date on the programme). The talkies had come in, providing him with a fresh medium, and everything he touches is transformed by a lyrical wit. The dancing rhythms are no longer a background; the characters themselves sing and dance with an exuberance that is the opposite of every "musical" that has plagued the eye and ear since. *Le Million*, though its score is of the lightest, is, in fact, the first screen opera. Perfect alliance of two arts in which movement is intrinsic: music and cinema. Add a third, Clair's decorative sense, exquisitely at play here in a muffled background, a grouping of persons or objects, and one has named the means by which he achieves his astonishing magic. That magic is a mixture of romanticism, burlesque, high spirits, and the kind of wit that is inseparable from beauty. Unlike the many films which one thinks good at the time—Eisenstein's, for example, or Lubitsch's—*Le Million* has the preservative of a sensibility that is everywhere personal. The only thing about this film that can be said to date is the length of the dresses. I should like to see one of our Francophil managers put on a repertory of Clair, showing *Chapeau de Paille*, *Sous Les Toits de Paris*, *Le Million*, *A Nous la Liberté*, *Quatorze Juillet* and perhaps *Le Dernier Milliardaire*. And there are his earlier films, *Paris qui Dort*, *Entr'acte*, *Les Deux Timides*, *Le Voyage Imaginaire*, and others. Such a season, besides setting a standard badly needed, would give many people the chance of seeing these films for the first time.

Battement de Cœur (director, Henry Decoin) begins charmingly in a crooks' academy, where promising pupils sit at their desks learning the subtleties of bag-snatching and innocent protest. Mlle. Darrieux only just manages to squeeze in, being unfortunately almost as honest as she looks. The story strays along rather conventional paths of love, riches and jealousy, but the academy is never quite lost sight of, and I enjoyed this pleasant if undistinguished comedy.

Some of *Three Caballeros* I enjoyed, too: about three Mickey lengths. There is a very funny beginning about a penguin that leaves the Pole for the tropics, lured by advertisement; but the rest, a travelogue about South America, is largely blare and glare. Cartoon and actuality are jumbled. One may love Donald Duck, one may be ravished by Mexican beauties, but not by the two together. This seems to me the most haphazard and blatant of all Disney's longer efforts. And only the other week we were treated to a perfect ten minutes of the Duck family in *Donald's Off Day*.

Robert Siodmak's *The Suspect* takes us to Bloomsbury (is it?) in the 1900's, in an almost first-rate murder story with Laughton in his only part of the kind since, I think, *Payment Deferred*. This time an intolerably spiteful wife drives the middle-aged shopkeeper to a crime which is not only pardonable but introduces an appealing if brief romantic episode; a second murder—as commendable in its way as the first—brings the overflow of confession. There are hints, as reviewers have pointed out, of the Crippen case, but Laughton himself (in good form) and his second wife (Ella Rains, who looks and acts charmingly) excite a far warmer sympathy in the onlooker. High marks for tension, local colour, story.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

THE DERELICT FAMILY

SIR,—As a working housewife I should like to contribute to the discussion raised by the article "The Derelict Family," and to bear out the remarks made by H. S. Cooper Hodgson, who shows a better understanding of the problem than the contributor of the article.

In the course of twelve years of married life I have brought up two children of my own and a stepdaughter, with intervals of five years between each child. Because my husband and I believe in families I am expecting another baby next October. At the end of my fortnight "lying in" I shall be called upon to tackle a 16-hour working day, beginning with the baby's feed at 6 a.m., and ending at 10.30 p.m. with the last feed. The hours in between will every one be fully occupied with washing, cooking, cleaning, shopping and getting meals, and bathing and cleaning the three smaller children, hours of work which are necessary if the standards of health and decency demanded today are to be maintained. This after a nine-months period of pregnancy, when the unborn child will be feeding on my body, and when of course I have to carry on as usual with the present domestic routine.

My income is above that of the average worker, yet despite that I know for a fact that my life for the next two years will be scarcely worth living, being unable to afford the current rate of 2s. an hour for domestic help, there being no system of "home helps" in this district. If I have to cope with these conditions, the plight of those in a less fortunate position than myself, or with a larger family, can be imagined.

The average worker is indignant if called upon to work more than nine hours a day, 5½ days a week, and will only do so on payment of "overtime." Yet in no industry to-day are there conditions of work such as have to be coped with by the working housewife, but the worker is, in the majority of cases, content to stand by and do very little to prevent the exploitation of his wife under the present system.

One of the most immediate requirements to render some aid to the working housewife is the development of the present "panel" system of medical aid which covers insured workers for medical treatment, to cover also his wife, so that aid can be given when a "lift up" is required to carry a sick woman over a difficult period. Our hospitals bear adequate testimony to the fact that in the majority of cases medical aid is not given to the working housewife until practically too late, because of the expense involved.

This, together with the wholesale development of the "home help" system under the control of the local councils, to cover not only the fortnight's lying-in period, as at present, but for a period of six months or so if necessary, the development of convalescent and rest homes for working mothers, the extension of the nursery school for "over 3's," and créches for the temporary care of small babies, would do a good deal to alleviate the distress amongst working class families, and incidentally help considerably in raising the birth rate. These measures, together with the payment of a minimum wage to all workers sufficient to support a wife and family up to the standards required by modern conditions, are essential if any real effort is to be made to cope with the problem raised, to say nothing of the hundreds of thousands of "near derelicts" who are actually so much an everyday thing that they cease to become a problem and are accepted by all as the commonplace lot of the working class.

WINIFRED RENSHAW

Sir,—N. R. Tillett, in the article "The Derelict Family," states a case for this unfortunate section of the community which needs stating.

Wilful neglect on the part of a parent should be differentiated from inability to manage a family, although the physical effect on the children may be the same. A mother may be regarded as a responsible adult committing a criminal offence—and legally she is so. A more realistic view of the situation is that she, mentally a child, is answerable for the well-being of children.

While strongly supporting the substance of N. R. Tillett's article, there is one point on which I would comment. It says, "It is true that a sentence of imprisonment involves the transfer of the children into the care of the local authority while the parents are serving their sentences; but as soon as they come out they demand their children back, and the Corporation has no power to retain them." According to my understanding of the law, provision is made for the continued care of such children. The Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, Section 61, in its definition of a child or young person in need of care or protection includes one in respect of whom the offence of neglect has been committed. On convicting the adult, the magistrates may direct that any child concerned be brought by the local authority before the appropriate Juvenile Court. On evidence of the conviction the Juvenile Court has full power to deal with the child as one found to be in need of care or protection. These powers include supervision at home or if necessary removal from home until the age of eighteen.

4, West End, Bristol, 3. KATHARINE CRUSE

HOUSING

SIR,—We are constantly being assured by the present Government that they are now doing everything in their power to solve the problem of housing returning Service men and bombed-out families.

After nearly five years' service abroad, I have returned to England and am shortly to be married. I have just spent my leave searching this district for a house with the following results: there are no less than three unoccupied cottages in this district which would be habitable, in one case without alteration, and in the other two cases after minor structural repairs have been carried out. One is being used to store furniture belonging to friends of the owner, who was anxious to avoid its being taken by evacuees, the second has been condemned by the local authorities, since the owner has refused to make minor repairs, and the third remains empty simply because the owner refuses to have tenants on his estate.

Finally I discovered a boat-house with a four-roomed flat above it on the estate of a member of a local Parish council. This has stood empty for as long as the present owner can remember. Although he was requested by his agent at the beginning of the war to make the place habitable, in his own words he "couldn't be bothered to spend the money." All that is necessary is the repair of a collapsed septic tank, the rest of the building being of solid construction and in good repair. The owner expressed considerable sympathy with the many Service men in my position but regretted that he could not entertain the idea of my living in his boat-house since it could only be reached by walking through his garden.

In the course of ten minutes' conversation, he produced some startling examples of period thinking. Pre-fabricated houses, in his opinion, must be deplored since they are unsightly, and their erection in his community would deprive local enterprise of an opportunity for "reasonable profits." Such was his concern for the welfare of the local builder that he was considerably upset when the Government allotted his district fifteen more pre-fabricated houses than his council had applied for. He was careful to explain, by the way, that since the death of the original members of this council, the electoral system has been replaced by the co-option of local landowners.

I maintain that until the Government impresses apathetic local authorities with the urgency of the housing situation, their assurances will do nothing to convince returning Service men of their sincerity.

CAPTAIN R.A. (B.L.A.)

ELECTORAL UNITY

SIR,—May I add two suggestions to your comments on the Common Wealth candidate's success in the Chelmsford by-election? Some weeks ago in an article in your columns I expressed the conviction that the countryside workers would now vote solidly for Socialist candidates if there were intensive and intelligent Socialist propaganda in the villages. There is a large agricultural electorate in Chelmsford and Wing-Commander Millington tells me that he received the majority of their votes. There is no reason whatever to suppose that the farm workers' mentality is different in Essex to the rural mentality of the south, the west and the north, and if the counties again return a majority of Tory members it will be solely due to the want of political education and leadership.

There is one other point. Wing-Commander Millington's opponent received a blessing of the Labour Party leader but there is no doubt that the local members of the Party voted for Millington. The refusal of the Transport House pundits to take the lead in ensuring a united Left is nothing less than a tragedy and the one hope is that the constituencies will revolt against this insensate policy. There are, indeed, suggestions that this may happen and that the Chelmsford example may be followed. I was present on Sunday afternoon at a packed meeting in the Theatre Royal, Aldershot, for the launching of Tom Wintringham's campaign as Common Wealth candidate for the constituency. The candidate, an expert and most persuasive speaker, was supported by Acland and Millington. The audience, of whom about a quarter were in uniform, were enthusiastic and after the set speeches, warm support for Wintringham was pledged by members of the local Communist Party and the representative of the local Labour Party who regretted that he could not pledge his associates,

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JONATHAN CAPE

but wished the candidate well. It would be difficult to find a more typical rural constituency than Aldershot but already there are signs that another Chelmsford result is much more than a possibility. Unhappily there are dozens of other constituencies which might be won but will be lost for the lack of unity or enterprise or both. SIDNEY DARK

RETURN TO POLAND

SIR,—I would appreciate it very much if you would kindly publish the enclosed text of my letter to the Foreign Secretary, dated April 11th, 1945.

On August 1st, 1944, I applied to the Passport Office for an Exit Permit to go to Poland. In reply to my repeated personal requests I was informed a number of times that my case is under consideration by the Foreign Office and on October 4th, 1944, I was given an answer in writing that the permit could not be granted until I presented a document stating the Polish émigré Government's consent to this effect.

As I recognise the legal authority only of the Committee of National Liberation, which has become the Polish Provisional Government in Warsaw, it was impossible for me to procure such a document, particularly in view of the fact that I was the Representative in Great Britain of the Polish Committee of National Liberation in the period between 18th October to 31st December, 1944.

On January 18th, 1945, I received a cable from the Polish Prime Minister, M. Osubka-Morawski, instructing me to come as soon as possible and take part in the reconstruction work in Poland.

On January 20th I gave the Passport Office (Mr. Cortis) a copy of the above-mentioned cable together with my passport containing a Soviet Union transit visa.

In spite of my repeated efforts to see the director of the respective department of the Foreign Office I was refused any explanation of the matter.

Whereas the whole of Poland has been liberated by the glorious Red Army and the rising Polish Army, it is my greatest desire and duty, as a patriot and faithful citizen, to join in the effort of rebuilding my terribly devastated country.

In view of the fact that Polish Provisional Government in Warsaw does not prevent British subjects in Poland from returning to Great Britain, I think it is only fair and just that one should expect reciprocity on the part of the British Government with regard to such Polish citizens as wish to return to their country.

I should, therefore, appreciate it if you would kindly arrange for the issue of the Exit Permit for my return to Poland.

May I add that I have had twice already the possibility of obtaining transport facilities to Poland.

The letter speaks for itself.

May I add that I have received no reply to the above letter.

As an officer in the Polish Army I was among the forces ready for the defence of Britain in 1940–41, and the only objection of the Foreign Office to my returning to Poland appears to be that I do not recognise the reactionary "Polish Government" in London.

I think democratic opinion in this country should be informed of these facts.

STEFAN WILANOWSKI

FREEDOM PRESS

SIR,—You have already devoted space to the Freedom Press case, but I feel justified in raising it again, in view of the very grave disquiet which it has caused to numerous writers and publishers, and the real danger that with the protagonists safely and unwarrantably in prison, public attention may be allowed to become diverted from what has happened.

If anyone of your readers feels that the suppression of this minority is unimportant to English political liberty, I can only say that the bombing of Guernica was unimportant to European political liberty, except in so far as it was the testing ground for the weapons of Fascism which were then preparing. This prosecution has revealed not only, as Mr. George Woodcock points out, the existence of a secret irresponsible political police, issuing and executing its own warrants, but also the entire body of the machinery upon which reactionary forces in this country are likely to rely when they attempt to impose on us permanent military and industrial conscription. The clamour of the opponents of "controls" may have resulted in lifting the blackout, but it has not been directed to abolishing powers such as these, which I find it hard to believe to have been directed any less against a possible General Strike than against fifth-column activity.

It is no answer that a possible Labour majority would abolish or safeguard these powers. It would not. Every attempt is now being made to frame a foreign policy which Labour could not repudiate and which would commit it to permanent military conscription. The Minister at present responsible for the abuse of the regulations is a Labour Minister.

Unless we demand the restoration of the constitutional rights of the subject forthwith, making it, if necessary, an issue in every constituency, and especially West Lewisham, we may find ourselves deprived of the power to demand anything. The release of the three imprisoned writers and the cessation of the powers under which they were improperly imprisoned are the minimum demands of freedom and justice. ALEX. COMFORT

THEATRE CENSORSHIP

SIR,—It has come to my knowledge that the Lord Chamberlain recently refused—on political grounds—to license a brilliant and original new play. This though legally valid, is in practice an extension of the censorship, since plays have been banned in recent times only on grounds of blasphemy, obscenity or libel.

Furthermore, I understand that the Lord Chamberlain's Office consulted the Foreign Office before the decision was made.

Having had the privilege of reading the play, I can vouch that it is non-propagandist comedy and contains no portraits of actual public figures, nor even allusions to them.

As a leading article in the *Times Literary Supplement* of April 14th bewailed the non-appearance of any new plays of merit during the war years, I wrote to the editor of that journal suggesting that one reason perhaps for that dearth might be this hitherto unusual censorship.

From his reply, it appears that the censorship extends even further, as the Lord Chamberlain's view has been meekly accepted without question. It also raises doubts whether the play was ever read since there is not a single general amongst its characters nor is there any mention of one!

I pointed out to the editor, when thanking him for his letter, that the humour in the play was applicable equally to Foreign Office officials, whom I suspected were the most sensitive subjects.

E. B. BALLANTINE.

65, Cottenham Park Road,
Wimbledon, S.W.20.

NO ALIBI

SIR,—The Canute who attempts to stem the tide of American illiteracy, which is eroding the English language, can expect little success and no thanks. Nevertheless, one goes on trying. This note is a shocked protest against the misuse of the word "alibi" in a recent editorial in the NEW STATESMAN entitled "Chelmsford Aftermath," (final sentence). For the information of the writer, may I insist (with the embattled dictionaries of Great Britain behind me) that "alibi," which has its own quite definite and exact meaning, may not be used indiscriminately as a synonym for "excuse"?

I make this protest believing that there are pages in the NEW STATESMAN which imply a passion for literature as well as politics. ALLAN M. LAING

[*The Editor, in San Francisco, has an alibi; his colleagues in Great Turnstile have none.*]

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Miss Emmet, already known for her interpretation of Whitehead's philosophy, has now written a book * to expound her own views on metaphysics. Metaphysics deals with the nature of reality, the reality that, as one would once have said, lies behind the phenomena we experience. But that is not how Miss Emmet puts it. Her main contention is that metaphysical thinking is analogical. By this she means that "it takes concepts drawn from some form of experience or some relation within experience, and extends them either so as to say something about the nature of 'reality,' or so as to suggest a possible mode of co-ordinating other experiences of different types from that from which the concept was originally derived." Here, then, are two functions which analogical thinking can perform. First, it can discern some significant pattern or concept within our experience and seek to use it as a key to the interpretation of reality as a whole. For example, some phenomena that we experience seem designed for a purpose; their explanation lies, as it were, in front, and we call them teleological; others seem to illustrate the type of activity associated with the machine; they are pushed, as it were, from behind. Hence, we may take the concepts either of teleology or of mechanism and extend them "so as to say something about the nature of reality." Or, alternatively, we may select some relation holding between experiences of the same type and then seek to extend it in such a way as to make sense of our experience as a whole.

But whichever we do, whether we are seeking to explain reality or to make sense of our experience, we are, according to Miss Emmet, thinking in terms of analogies, of analogies drawn from within our experience. What is more, we don't for the most part know that this *is* what we are doing. The question, then, arises: "Are such analogies not in the end products of the form-creating activity of mind, constructing pictures of the world . . . seen through the medium of a particular kind of experience?" In other words, is metaphysical thinking a window through which we may catch a glimpse, however obscure, of the nature of reality; or is it only a mirror in which we see reflected ourselves? We used once to think that thought was a searchlight to illuminate the dark places of the universe and that the area so illuminated would grow. Thinking may, however, Miss Emmet suggests, be only a form of self-exploration; philosophy, in fact, while telling us much about philosophers, tells us little about the world except in so far as philosophers form part of the world. Now this, so far as I can see, is, in fact, Miss Emmet's view, but I am not clear whether she thinks merely that metaphysics amounts to no more than this at the moment—a moment when we happen to be at the dead end of a long period of metaphysical thinking—or whether this, from the nature of things, is all that it can ever amount to. My impression is that officially she holds the former alternative; but her analysis of thinking is such that, in my view, she *ought* to hold the latter. In other words, if the account that she gives of the nature of metaphysical thinking is correct, we are effectively precluded from obtaining information as to the nature of reality.

In defence of what I may call her official view, she has much that is interesting to say about the position of philosophy in general and metaphysics in particular at the present time. Our elders, she points out, looked for all-embracing syntheses, syntheses of religion and science, of theology and art, to afford a comprehensive pattern for the interpretation of experience. But we are "becoming increasingly conscious of diversities and discontinuities in our worlds of thought and experience." Why is this? There is a number of reasons. Psychology has laid bare the ambush in which rationalisation lurks; we think we are thinking objectively and impartially about reality when, in fact, we are only reaching the conclusions to which we are prompted by our desires. Again, there is the modern concept of the world as consisting, not of substances with characteristics which can be known, but as "a maze of interrelated processes which can only be seen through the medium of minds which are themselves immersed in the process." Miss Emmet makes some interesting reflections on Joyce and Proust in this connection. Above all, there is the difficulty of communication. Our diverse worlds of contemporary thought do not "make sense as a coherent unity." For example, we do not understand the metaphysical relevance of the new physics; we have not yet discovered the scope or assessed the significance of psycho-analysis; we are unable as yet to gauge the bearing of the new boundary sciences such as bio-chemistry; above all, we have no agreed concept of the purpose of man's societies or of the relation of the individual to the State. In short, the world of thought is not unlike the world of politics. "We no longer live in a common civilisation which speaks a common intellectual language. Hence, we are beset by the problem of communication." And because of this lack of communication between different intellectual spheres, we are no more able to find a form of synthesis to make sense of our many diverse experiences and intellectual disciplines than we are to find a common form of government to impose unity upon diverse national States.

All this is very well done. There is little to cavil at, much to accept and to be grateful for in Miss Emmet's analysis of contemporary philosophical thought. But I think that her inability to provide or to discern a metaphysical synthesis goes deeper and springs from her original conception, which I should regard as a misconception of metaphysical method. If her account of that method be correct, then what she diagnoses as a characteristic of contemporary metaphysics is, I should say, an inalienable limitation of all metaphysics. The trouble begins with her initial definition of metaphysics as starting "from the articulation of relationships, which are judged to be constitutive of an experience or experiences in a significant way." Metaphysics starts, in other words, from an analysis of experience. For Miss Emmet it never succeeds in travelling beyond its starting point. Thus, in the course of a lengthy analysis of the vexed problem of perception, she first dismisses "the naïvely realist conception that our ideas give us direct knowledge of things just as they are," and proceeds to defend a "phenomenalist account of the contents of experience," to defend, that is to say, the view that we know, not objects external to ourselves, but only the changing flux of the events that occur *in* our experience. So far is she from regarding the outside world as the direct object of our perceptual knowledge, that physical objects are not for her even the causes of our perceptions, which are described as "arising through an integration of two types of activity in an organism which is related dynamically to its environment." The most, in other words, that Miss Emmet will allow is that our experience is "a responsive relation to, or even inter-penetration with, 'transcendent' events and objects." In other words, although we do not know external events and objects, we do know that we are in relation with them and that our experiences are in some sense a response to them. But if we only know phenomenal experiences, it is not easy to see how we can know facts about their sources which are *ex hypothesi* outside our experience. Miss Emmet is too old a hand at this business for me to venture lightly to reproach her with such words of philosophical shame as Solipsism and Representationalism; but if this were a student's thesis, these are the notes I should be making in the margin. As it is, I venture merely to suggest that the ice over which her analysis so perilously skates is very thin, and to add that on a number of occasions she seems to me to go right through. I believe that metaphsics is doomed from the moment that we give up the notion that the mind in experience makes direct contact with a reality external to itself whose features experience reveals. Let us suppose that we use the word "experience" in the widest sense, refusing to limit it to *sensory* experience, and insisting that it is always revelatory of something other than ourselves. Then experience reveals, I suggest, at least three types of object. First, there are the things that we know and can give an account of: perceived objects, mathematical expressions, historical facts; secondly, there are the things that we don't know but which we theoretically could know, and could describe if we did: for example, the other side of the moon, unexplored tracts of history; thirdly, there are things that we experience but cannot describe because we have no language available for the description: for example, the beauty of a Beethoven quartet or the reality revealed to mystical contemplation. (It is no accident, by the way, that most musical criticism is a monument of irrelevances, while mystics talk of "a delicious desert," of a "dazzling darkness," of "the drop in the ocean and the ocean in the drop." Language, invented to convey the meanings and uses of this world, cannot easily be transformed into a vehicle for the meanings appropriate to another. If mysticism could give an account of itself, it would cease to be mysticism.) But because certain experiences are incommunicable to those who have not shared them, and because we cannot describe or give an account of the reality that they disclose, it does not, therefore, follow, as Miss Emmet seems to think, that it is not reality that is directly experienced; or that the metaphysical thinker is only projecting the concepts formed by his own mind on to the canvas of a meaningless universe, where he subsequently proceeds to hail with a naïve surprise what he himself has put there. If metaphysics is merely concerned, as she suggests, to interpret relationships within experience, then we cannot, it is clear, know a reality outside experience at all. But, if so, we could not know that there was a reality outside experiences that we did not know. In short, we could not make statements about it at all.

C. E. M. Joad

* *The Nature of Metaphysical Thinking*. By Dorothy Emmet. *Macmillan*. 10*s*. 6*d*.

NEW NOVELS

Cliffs of Fall. By Dan Davin. *Nicholson and Watson*. 8*s*. 6*d*.

The Lost Week-end. By Charles Jackson. *The Bodley Head*. 8*s*. 6*d*.

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A first novel is sometimes a writer's best, sometimes his worst, and sometimes his last. There is no generalisation to be made. The three under review show how little they need resemble each other, even in the one quality which we might expect to find in common. Nothing could be more accomplished than *The Lost Week-end* or less accomplished than *Cliffs of Fall*. Mr. Davin's book is a failure, as certainly as it is honourably a failure. The majority of first novels by talented young men are dishonourable successes. By this I mean that their ambition is low, and they achieve it. They get their pass degrees, and their books are properly forgotten. Any writer of ability and the gift of imitation can write a plausible piece after Isherwood. Mr. Davin has written a most implausible piece after Gide and Dostoevsky. His theme is titanic, and defeats him from the first page: he fails in his examination, but I doubt whether this will greatly disturb him.

Like all great themes, Mr. Davin's is fundamentally a simple and ancient one. A young New Zealander, who has struggled to the local university from an arid and toil-ridden family background, finds that his girl is going to have a baby by him. (A rather obvious mechanism makes abortion impossible.) Mark is consumed with ambition, with hatred of family life and with a maldororian urge to defy the reigning God. He brutally strangles the girl, and is driven by his Erinyes to jump over a cliff to his death. It is Prometheus, Lucifer, Gide's Immoralist, and Raskolnikov, among many others. Mr. Davin, unless his book is most misleading, is a very young man, but his ambition is noble and un-

but wished the candidate well. It would be difficult to find a more typical rural constituency than Aldershot but already there are signs that another Chelmsford result is much more than a possibility. Unhappily there are dozens of other constituencies which might be won but will be lost for the lack of unity or enterprise or both. SIDNEY DARK

RETURN TO POLAND

SIR,—I would appreciate it very much if you would kindly publish the enclosed text of my letter to the Foreign Secretary, dated April 11th, 1945.

On August 1st, 1944, I applied to the Passport Office for an Exit Permit to go to Poland. In reply to my repeated personal requests I was informed a number of times that my case is under consideration by the Foreign Office and on October 4th, 1944, I was given an answer in writing that the permit could not be granted until I presented a document stating the Polish émigré Government's consent to this effect.

As I recognise the legal authority only of the Committee of National Liberation, which has become the Polish Provisional Government in Warsaw, it was impossible for me to procure such a document, particularly in view of the fact that I was the Representative in Great Britain of the Polish Committee of National Liberation in the period between 18th October to 31st December, 1944.

On January 18th, 1945, I received a cable from the Polish Prime Minister, M. Osubka-Morawski, instructing me to come as soon as possible and take part in the reconstruction work in Poland.

On January 20th I gave the Passport Office (Mr. Cortis) a copy of the above-mentioned cable together with my passport containing a Soviet Union transit visa.

In spite of my repeated efforts to see the director of the respective department of the Foreign Office I was refused any explanation of the matter.

Whereas the whole of Poland has been liberated by the glorious Red Army and the rising Polish Army, it is my greatest desire and duty, as a patriot and faithful citizen, to join in the effort of rebuilding my terribly devastated country.

In view of the fact that Polish Provisional Government in Warsaw does not prevent British subjects in Poland from returning to Great Britain, I think it is only fair and just that one should expect reciprocity on the part of the British Government with regard to such Polish citizens as wish to return to their country.

I should, therefore, appreciate it if you would kindly arrange for the issue of the Exit Permit for my return to Poland.

May I add that I have had twice already the possibility of obtaining transport facilities to Poland.

The letter speaks for itself.

May I add that I have received no reply to the above letter.

As an officer in the Polish Army I was among the forces ready for the defence of Britain in 1940–41, and the only objection of the Foreign Office to my returning to Poland appears to be that I do not recognise the reactionary "Polish Government" in London.

I think democratic opinion in this country should be informed of these facts.

STEFAN WILANOWSKI

FREEDOM PRESS

SIR,—You have already devoted space to the Freedom Press case, but I feel justified in raising it again, in view of the very grave disquiet which it has caused to numerous writers and publishers, and the real danger that with the protagonists safely and unwarrantably in prison, public attention may be allowed to become diverted from what has happened.

If anyone of your readers feels that the suppression of this minority is unimportant to English political liberty, I can only say that the bombing of Guernica was unimportant to European political liberty, except in so far as it was the testing ground for the weapons of Fascism which were then preparing. This prosecution has revealed not only, as Mr. George Woodcock points out, the existence of a secret irresponsible political police, issuing and executing its own warrants, but also the entire body of the machinery upon which reactionary forces in this country are likely to rely when they attempt to impose on us permanent military and industrial conscription. The clamour of the opponents of "controls" may have resulted in lifting the blackout, but it has not been directed to abolishing powers such as these, which I find it hard to believe to have been directed any less against a possible General Strike than against fifth-column activity.

It is no answer that a possible Labour majority would abolish or safeguard these powers. It would not. Every attempt is now being made to frame a foreign policy which Labour could not repudiate and which would commit it to permanent military conscription. The Minister at present responsible for the abuse of the regulations is a Labour Minister.

Unless we demand the restoration of the constitutional rights of the subject forthwith, making it, if necessary, an issue in every constituency, and especially West Lewisham, we may find ourselves deprived of the power to demand anything. The release of the three imprisoned writers and the cessation of the powers under which they were improperly imprisoned are the minimum demands of freedom and justice. ALEX. COMFORT

THEATRE CENSORSHIP

SIR,—It has come to my knowledge that the Lord Chamberlain recently refused—on political grounds—to license a brilliant and original new play. This, though legally valid, is in practice an extension of the censorship, since plays have been banned in recent times only on grounds of blasphemy, obscenity or libel.

Furthermore, I understand that the Lord Chamberlain's Office consulted the Foreign Office before the decision was made.

Having had the privilege of reading the play, I can vouch that it is non-propagandist comedy and contains no portraits of actual public figures, nor even allusions to them.

As a leading article in the *Times Literary Supplement* of April 14th bewailed the non-appearance of any new plays of merit during the war years, I wrote to the editor of that journal suggesting that one reason, perhaps for that dearth might be this hitherto unusual censorship.

From his reply, it appears that the censorship extends even further, as the Lord Chamberlain's view has been meekly accepted without question. It also raises doubts whether the play was ever read since there is not a single general amongst its characters nor is there any mention of one!

I pointed out to the editor, when thanking him for his letter, that the humour in the play was applicable equally to Foreign Office officials, whom I suspected were the most sensitive subjects.

E. B. BALLANTINE.

65, Cottenham Park Road,
Wimbledon, S.W.20.

NO ALIBI

SIR,—The Canute who attempts to stem the tide of American illiteracy, which is eroding the English language, can expect little success and no thanks. Nevertheless, one goes on trying. This note is a shocked protest against the misuse of the word "alibi" in a recent editorial in the NEW STATESMAN entitled "Chelmsford Aftermath," (final sentence). For the information of the writer, may I insist (with the embattled dictionaries of Great Britain behind me) that "alibi," which has its own quite definite and exact meaning, may not be used indiscriminately as a synonym for "excuse"?

I make this protest believing that there are pages in the NEW STATESMAN which imply a passion for literature as well as politics. ALLAN M. LAING

[*The Editor, in San Francisco, has an alibi; his colleagues in Great Turnstile have none.*]

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Miss Emmet, already known for her interpretation of Whitehead's philosophy, has now written a book * to expound her own views on metaphysics. Metaphysics deals with the nature of reality, the reality that, as one would once have said, lies behind the phenomena we experience. But that is not how Miss Emmet puts it. Her main contention is that metaphysical thinking is analogical. By this she means that "it takes concepts drawn from some form of experience or some relation within experience, and extends them either so as to say something about the nature of 'reality,' or so as to suggest a possible mode of co-ordinating other experiences of different types from that from which the concept was originally derived." Here, then, are two functions which analogical thinking can perform. First, it can discern some significant pattern or concept within our experience and seek to use it as a key to the interpretation of reality as a whole. For example, some phenomena that we experience seem designed for a purpose; their explanation lies, as it were, in front, and we call them teleological; others seem to illustrate the type of activity associated with the machine; they are pushed, as it were, from behind. Hence, we may take the concepts either of teleology or of mechanism and extend them "so as to say something about the nature of reality." Or, alternatively, we may select some relation holding between experiences of the same type and then seek to extend it in such a way as to make sense of our experience as a whole.

But whichever we do, whether we are seeking to explain reality or to make sense of our experience, we are, according to Miss Emmet, thinking in terms of analogies, of analogies drawn from within our experience. What is more, we don't for the most part know that this *is* what we are doing. The question, then, arises: "Are such analogies not in the end products of the form-creating activity of mind, constructing pictures of the world . . . seen through the medium of a particular kind of experience?" In other words, is metaphysical thinking a window through which we may catch a glimpse, however obscure, of the nature of reality; or is it only a mirror in which we see reflected ourselves? We used once to think that thought was a searchlight to illuminate the dark places of the universe and that the area so illuminated would grow. Thinking may, however, Miss Emmet suggests, be only a form of self-exploration; philosophy, in fact, while telling us much about philosophers, tells us little about the world except in so far as philosophers form part of the world. Now this, so far as I can see, is, in fact, Miss Emmet's view, but I am not clear whether she thinks merely that metaphysics amounts to no more than this at the moment—a moment when we happen to be at the dead end of a long period of metaphysical thinking—or whether this, from the nature of things, is all that it can ever amount to. My impression is that officially she holds the former alternative; but her analysis of thinking is such that, in my view, she *ought* to hold the latter. In other words, if the account that she gives of the nature of metaphysical thinking is correct, we are effectively precluded from obtaining information as to the nature of reality.

In defence of what I may call her official view, she has much that is interesting to say about the position of philosophy in general and metaphysics in particular at the present time. Our elders, she points out, looked for all-embracing syntheses, syntheses of religion and science, of theology and art, to afford a comprehensive pattern for the interpretation of experience. But we are "becoming increasingly conscious of diversities and discontinuities in our worlds of thought and experience." Why is this? There is a number of reasons. Psychology has laid bare the ambush in which rationalisation lurks; we think we are thinking objectively and impartially about reality when, in fact, we are only reaching the conclusions to which we are prompted by our desires. Again, there is the modern concept of the world as consisting, not of substances with characteristics which can be known, but as "a maze of interrelated processes which can only be seen through the medium of minds which are themselves immersed in the process." Miss Emmet makes some interesting reflections on Joyce and Proust in this connection. Above all, there is the difficulty of communication. Our diverse worlds of contemporary thought do not "make sense as a coherent unity." For example, we do not understand the metaphysical relevance of the new physics; we have not yet discovered the scope or assessed the significance of psycho-analysis; we are unable as yet to gauge the bearing of the new boundary sciences such as bio-chemistry; above all, we have no agreed concept of the purpose of man's societies or of the relation of the individual to the State. In short, the world of thought is not unlike the world of politics. "We no longer live in a common civilisation which speaks a common intellectual language. Hence, we are beset by the problem of communication." And because of this lack of communication between different intellectual spheres, we are no more able to find a form of synthesis to make sense of our many diverse experiences and intellectual disciplines than we are to find a common form of government to impose unity upon diverse national States.

All this is very well done. There is little to cavil at, much to accept and to be grateful for in Miss Emmet's analysis of contemporary philosophical thought. But I think that her inability to provide or to discern a metaphysical synthesis goes deeper and springs from her original conception, which I should regard as a misconception of metaphysical method. If her account of that method be correct, then what she diagnoses as a characteristic of contemporary metaphysics is, I should say, an inalienable limitation of all metaphysics. The trouble begins with her initial definition of metaphysics as starting "from the articulation of relationships, which are judged to be constitutive of an experience or experiences in a significant way." Metaphysics starts, in other words, from an analysis of experience. For Miss Emmet it never succeeds in travelling beyond its starting point. Thus, in the course of a lengthy analysis of the vexed problem of perception, she first dismisses "the naïvely realist conception that our ideas give us direct knowledge of things just as they are," and proceeds to defend a "phenomenalist account of the contents of experience," to defend, that is to say, the view that we know, not objects external to ourselves, but only the changing flux of the events that occur *in* our experience. So far is she from regarding the outside world as the direct object of our perceptual knowledge, that physical objects are not for her even the causes of our perceptions, which are described as "arising through an integration of two types of activity in an organism which is related dynamically to its environment." The most, in other words, that Miss Emmet will allow is that our experience is "a responsive relation to, or even inter-penetration with, 'transcendent' events and objects." In other words, although we do not know external events and objects, we do know that we are in relation with them and that our experiences are in some sense a response to them. But if we only know phenomenal experiences, it is not easy to see how we can know facts about their sources which are *ex hypothesi* outside our experience. Miss Emmet is too old a hand at this business for me to venture lightly to reproach her with such words of philosophical shame as Solipsism and Representationalism; but if this were a student's thesis, these are the notes I should be making in the margin. As it is, I venture merely to suggest that the ice over which her analysis so perilously skates is very thin, and to add that on a number of occasions she seems to me to go right through. I believe that metaphsics is doomed from the moment that we give up the notion that the mind in experience makes direct contact with a reality external to itself whose features experience reveals. Let us suppose that we use the word "experience" in the widest sense, refusing to limit it to *sensory* experience, and insisting that it is always revelatory of something other than ourselves. Then experience reveals, I suggest, at least three types of object. First, there are the things that we know and can give an account of: perceived objects, mathematical expressions, historical facts; secondly, there are the things that we don't know but which we theoretically could know, and could describe if we did: for example, the other side of the moon, unexplored tracts of history; thirdly, there are things that we experience but cannot describe because we have no language available for the description: for example, the beauty of a Beethoven quartet or the reality revealed to mystical contemplation. (It is no accident, by the way, that most musical criticism is a monument of irrelevances, while mystics talk of "a delicious desert," of a "dazzling darkness," of "the drop in the ocean and the ocean in the drop." Language, invented to convey the meanings and uses of this world, cannot easily be transformed into a vehicle for the meanings appropriate to another. If mysticism could give an account of itself, it would cease to be mysticism.) But because certain experiences are incommunicable to those who have not shared them, and because we cannot describe or give an account of the reality that they disclose, it does not, therefore, follow, as Miss Emmet seems to think, that it is not reality that is directly experienced; or that the metaphysical thinker is only projecting the concepts formed by his own mind on to the canvas of a meaningless universe, where he subsequently proceeds to hail with a naïve surprise what he himself has put there. If metaphysics is merely concerned, as she suggests, to interpret relationships within experience, then we cannot, it is clear, know a reality outside experience at all. But, if so, we could not know that there was a reality outside experiences that we did not know. In short, we could not make statements about it at all.

C. E. M. Joad

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limited. The nature of his failure cannot be illustrated, for it is all-pervasive. We simply do not believe the young man capable of it at all, and the atmosphere of the book is inadequate to atone for the inadequacy of its hero. We are not shocked or moved by the tragedy because it does not touch that deep-patterned layer of the mind where these great themes live. Yet it is not that the whole thing seems forced or inflated—but rather inarticulate. The passion is in the writer, constantly breaking out into admirable, though incidental, expression. There are many such inadequacies as "his guilt . . . tearing at his entrails," but he is capable of real felicity: "I wouldn't want to melt away in sugary stagnation like a sweet in a sunny shop window."

It would have been easy, of course, to have written the book in the manner of Upward's *Journey on the Bomber*, or a hundred others. Mark would then merely have contemplated his great gesture, longed to accomplish it and known that he never could. We would have had another half-humorous portrait of the thwarted young man, seething with impotent megalomania. How admirably courageous was the other choice. Mr. Davin (I have warded it off as long as I could) will go far.

Mr. Jackson's *The Lost Week End* is as far away from all this as New York is from New Zealand. It is a clever, exceedingly adult and entirely successful study of dipsomania; a novel firmly bedded in the distinguished tradition of the recessive American novelists (O'Hara, Scott Fitzgerald, Carson McCullers, Mary McCarthy). Don Birnam is a middle-aged and incurable drunkard, and the book is an account of three typical days during one of his drinking bouts. If he had not been an intelligent and sympathetic man, it could have had little artistic value. And because Don indulges in all the grotesque or vulgar fantasies of drunkenness, only wearily to explode them; because he practises all the dishonesties and meanness of the drunk, and knows what they are, we are shown a devilish picture of the schizophrenia which is latent in us all. Mr. Jackson is a good anthropologist and a good descriptive psychologist. He knows in the most painful detail how a drunk behaves and how his half-ruined mind revolves on its worn little circuit. That it is a good novel as well as a good piece of research is due to the pervasive awareness of tragedy, of destiny warring triumphantly against the lamed forces of free-will.

Mr. Jackson flirts with psychoanalytical explanations of Don Birnam's condition—but he does not throw any very clear light on its deeper causes. It is not difficult, I think, to discover the origin of the weak area in a human configuration—but why did the same weakness lead to this result in this man, to that in another? Why did this ill-weaned child become a drunkard, that one a puritanical dictator? I find that Birnam's latent homosexuality adds little to our understanding. This is a piece of brilliant field-work rather than of analysis.

Prophecies are wanton and ill-advised in a review. I will write only that I shall be surprised if Mr. Jackson ever writes a better book. It is a kind of accomplishment from which it is hard to envisage development.

Both Mr. Davin and Mr. Jackson have had good reason to write a novel. I can find none in the inexplicable case of Mr. Francis Williams. A successful editor and a respected publicist, it evidently occurred to him that he might as well "try his hand" at a novel. It is precisely as ludicrous as if Mr. E. M. Forster were to try his hand at editing the *Daily Herald*. Yet the illusion is widespread that novel-writing is a fit spare-time hobby for anybody. Nor is the novelist's resentment at this casual trespassing due simply to a selfish guild exclusiveness. But these unthinking amateurs do infinite harm to the novel's name. Svevo, Conrad and many others took to the novel late in life and from other professions. But they took to it with fanaticism, finding in it their true expression and activity.

Quite apart from high questions of art there is a craft of fiction which is by no means easy to learn. Mr. Williams entirely ignores the existence of such a thing. He does not realise, for instance, that the mere statement "five years passed" is quite inadequate to convey the passage of time. He does not realise that it is futile to devote a page to the description of an incidental and quite meaningless character who is never to appear again. He does not realise that public events cannot be simply planted at intervals throughout a novel in order to give a period flavour.

The book tells of a business and political career between the two wars. The hero is torn between worldly success and the life of the spirit—elects finally for the spirit. Yet it cannot be said that Mr. Williams has the excuse of a burning message to impart which could not be fitted into an editorial. The bare statement that the spirit is the real goods contributes nothing to which the hoariest old newspaper king would not agree. Occasional skilful passages are not enough to justify this book.

PHILIP TOYNBEE

DISILLUSION

The Yogi and the Commissar. By ARTHUR KOESTLER. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

This is a disturbing book, as is to be expected, for the disillusion of an honest and very intelligent man "hath an art to make dust of all things." The book is a collection of essays, written at various times and for various places, but obviously during the last three years a compelling current of thought has been running consistently in Mr. Koestler's mind, and this gives a unity to his book which is unusual when a writer harvests his journalism in "volume form." The title of his book points the direction of his thought and disillusion. The Yogi is the saint and mystic who believes that nothing can be achieved by reason or action, and that, since the end is unpredictable, only the means count; even the cultivation of one's garden—hitherto the last refuge of the sane in the world of maniacs—should be abandoned for the contemplation of one's navel. The Commissar is the revolutionary who believes only in reason and in "Change from Without"; he believes that "all the pests of humanity, including constipation and the Œdipus complex," can be cured "by a radical reorganisation of the system of production and distribution of goods; that this end justifies the use of all means, including violence, ruse, treachery and poison."

Mr. Koestler began on the side of the Commissar, and the roots of his present discontent are to be traced to the U.S.S.R. Well over half his book is contained in Part III, entitled "Explorations." It is a detailed analysis of the Soviet system of government and social organisation and of the results, the anatomy, as he calls it, of the Soviet myth and the Soviet reality. His conclusion is "the end of an illusion," for he sums up the result of his enquiry as follows:

> Soviet Russia is a State-Capitalistic totalitarian autocracy. It is progressive in its economic structure and regressive in every other respect. Politically, culturally, in the relations between rulers and ruled, it is reactionary compared with most Capitalist democracies. It pursues an expansionist policy which, though operating with new methods, reflects the old historic aims of Imperial Russia.
>
> To the working classes and the progressive forces in other parts of the world, Russia has no more specific significance than any other Great Power.

The facts which form the data for Mr. Koestler's exploration cannot be dismissed. They must be profoundly disquieting to anyone who has survived the two wars, remembers the hopes of 1917, and still believes that somehow or other Socialism and democracy must be made realities if the organised life of modern Europe is to recover a civilised equilibrium. Neither Communist nor anti-Communist propaganda should deter us from the nasty business of facing facts, *inter alia* the disastrous direction which a totalitarian distribution of power has given to Soviet development. The facts cannot be faced or interpreted, nor their lesson learnt, unless one steels oneself to ignore the thunder on the Right and the intimidation on the Left. But the bitterness of disillusion is itself not a very good mental atmosphere for the study of contemporary politics and economics. Mr. Koestler is a brilliant writer and often a profound thinker; he has the rare merit of being able to think important thoughts and to clothe them in words which reveal rather than conceal their importance. But he writes and thinks with a bitterness, sometimes a personal bitterness, which defeats his purpose, if it does not cloud his judgment. Fundamentally he remains on the side of the Commissar and there is no evidence in his books that he has any use for the way of the Yogi. But in the hard and fast line definition of his Commissar something essential is omitted. Even the most materialist and rigid of comrades has some standards of value, and it may perhaps be found with a little further exploration that where the Commissar goes wrong is not so much in his method as in the relation which he maintains between his method and standards of value. Mr. Koestler himself seems to catch a glimpse of the truth in his conclusion, for he writes:

> The conclusion towards which all our arguments converge is that the spreading of Russian pseudo-communism over Europe can be stopped only by a true socialist movement. The antidote to Eastern Byzantinism is Western revolutionary humanism.

LEONARD WOOLF

AN UNUSUAL MISSIONARY

My Father in China. By JAMES BURKE. *Michael Joseph.* 15s.

William Burke, home for his retirement after 40 years as a missionary in China, always thought longingly of Sungkiang. The contrast particularly troubled him when he called on American business men. In China, when he went to see old Daung, or Yung, or Wang, they stopped whatever they were doing, called for tea and enjoyed two hours of pleasant aimless conversation. There was never any abrupt "Now, what can I do for you?"

William Burke was appointed a missionary to China in the year 1887 when he was twenty-three years old. "It is God's will that the heathen be saved," he declared at his farewell service in Kansas City. "Providential signals are waving before us. China and Japan are in the formative state concerning Western civilisation."

Forty-seven years later, after a lifetime of devotion to the Chinese people, he was thoroughly assimilated into their communal life and so much out of touch with the bustling materialism of his home town back in America that he found retirement impossible and returned to Sungkiang, now largely destroyed by Japanese bombs.

My Father in China is not only a delightful story of a saintly character, it contains snapshots of everyday life in that country during fifty years of its history, at a time when it was emerging from a satisfied isolation into a world power, very unsure of itself. He was in the Lower Yangtse valley during the riots of 1891; he was in Shanghai in the autumn of 1899 while the Boxers were fermenting and the combined hatred of the foreigner and of the decadent Manchus reached its height.

Burke sympathised with the "anti-foreign Fists," as the Boxers were called. There in plain view off the Bund were opium hulks off Shanghai. There was nothing secret about it. Routine reports appeared in the Chinese press announcing the sale of opium from Benares and Patna.

When the Revolution unexpectedly happened in 1911, he was in Sungkiang where the revolutionists "prowled through the streets with great shears slashing pigtails indiscriminately,

for the queue was originally imposed on the Chinese by their Manchu conquerors as a badge of subjugation. From 1919, when the Chinese students began the next stage of the Revolution, as a protest against the betrayal of China by the Allies, "many things were coming up at that time to engage the missionaries' attentions. They were mostly non-religious."

William Burke soon learnt what an appreciative people the Chinese are. He won their confidence not because he had come as a missionary but because he organised a "water line" of coolies with buckets of water which extinguished a fire in a tea-shop. He took medicines whenever he went into the neighbouring countryside on evangelistic trips, usually opening a clinic or his houseboat after preaching. "Next to God, Burke swore by calomel, castor oil or quinine." His wife, too, was a practical woman. She organised a class for women interested in the anti-footbinding movement. This sensitive young missionary, when approached, would take off the tiny red-silk shoes, unwrap the tight bandages from the little feet, scarcely five inches long, massaging gently with vaseline as she worked.

This original missionary seemed to understand the spiritual background of a civilisation so different from his own. He saw in his own town the coexistence of Buddhism and Taoism, how they compromised and shared profits, how Buddhist and Taoist gods sat side by side in the same temple, "with a dash of Confucianism thrown into the worship ceremony." One day Burke's father sent him a bell, weighing five hundred pounds. He had it hung in a wooden tower of his chapel. The Chinese gathered round to hear it, showing no resentment since Burke was no longer an unwelcome stranger. The local Buddhist priest however felt this threatened his prestige and initiated a story which floated round the tea-houses to the effect that the god S. Siang Kong complained of a headache from the bell. Finally, the priest led a group of followers to the shrine and there in the back of the idol's head was a crack fully five inches long. The people believed the story well enough, but the tea-houses roared with laughter over the discomfort of the god at the hands of a rival. They hadn't caused the Buddhist god's head to crack. They laughed and William Burke's bell continued to ring. There was much more rivalry between the Protestant and Catholic churches than with the Buddhist or Taoist temples.

And so the story goes on. Burke found a home in China for the rest of his life. When his friend Lok discovered it was his birthday, he arranged a great feast for him. The *pièce de résistance* was a "glutinous delicacy littered with candles"—thirty of them. "This is the Occidental birthday custom," the young scholar announced, breaking the awed silence. "It is specially for our honourable teacher, Mr. Burke, who observed his thirtieth birthday last week. Foreigners, you know, recognise their birthdays years before we Chinese do. But I think it is a good idea. Please, now I invite you to eat."

Burke's magnanimity won over the Japanese officers when they occupied Sungkiang in 1939, and he was allowed to stay on in his bombed mission hall. "No one, I think, will consider you a spy," the Japanese officer said to him, and allowed him to distribute food to the people who were now starving. Above all things Burke was a practical man, inspired by a sense of brotherhood for his fellow creatures. Whether he believed in Buddha, or Confucius, or Jesus Christ was irrelevant to the Chinese who approach life through practice and not through theory.

"Old Boo Sien-sang (his Chinese name) is still in his home at Sungkiang. . . . He looks thin and old," a missionary woman wrote to a friend three years ago, and that is the last we have heard of William Burke.

DOROTHY WOODMAN

THE SCHOOL TEACHER

The Boys' Grammar School. By H. DAVIES. *Methuen.* 6s.

This is a pleasant and useful book written in a spirit of sweet reasonableness. The approach is educationally "Left," but Mr. Davies admits that education has owed much to independence, and that the independent schools have more disinterested motives in considering partnership with the State than their own survival. The book contains nothing arrestingly new, but it is valuable as a synthesis of much pioneer writing and of Government reports absorbed by a liberal-minded, practical schoolmaster. A particular virtue of the book is its emphasis on the individual boy. This is important at a time when educational machinery threatens to smother the truth that education must mean training in true personal relationships, in tenderness, and in power of responsive understanding. The writer's courage merits applause. He is apparently in charge of a school geared for astronomical results in public examinations. Yet he questions whether this machinery is achieving true education, and wants to seek after more intangible values. Caliban clamped to the earth is not enough: the school must aspire to the free condition of Ariel.

Using all the familiar criticisms of School Certificate, he yet does not take into account that some examining authorities give to the schools the opportunity of shaping the examination more nearly to their heart's desire, if only the apathy of the teachers, who "are so used to a routine that they dare not venture into the unknown," can be overcome. If people are bald they needs must have resort to wigs, and one wonders at Mr. Davies's philippic about the hard lot of teachers. They are depicted as members of the worst paid of all the professions, and "their days are filled with a ceaseless round of teaching" and "small routine tasks." On the same page we read: "Many teachers are naturally unwilling to give up part of their summer holidays" to attend vacation courses devised for their intellectual refreshment. All this is just too bad. One wonders what doctors and nurses, who endure the tyranny of inconvenient and unsocial hours, say about the comparative lot of the teacher. It is high time that the teaching world wondered whether its dubious claim to the status of profession and its uncertain hold upon the respect of laymen do not proceed from an excessive preoccupation with hours and wages. There are some good teachers; and these are very good indeed. There are also a huge number of what Shakespeare called "living dead men," who lack all authentic "fire in the belly" about their job. Mr. Davies complains that men from inferior public schools secure headships of grammar schools. However inferior their stable the result may not be disastrous, provided that the men have been nurtured in a tradition which is found more in the public school than elsewhere. This tradition envisages education as knowing no hours; "the longest day was never then too long"; and unless at the end of day or term a teacher feels that virtue has gone out of him, he deserves neither his evening nor his holiday.

Mr. Davies has interesting and constructive suggestions, but his (admittedly deserved) criticism of the grammar school achievement is a little untimely. Grammar schools seem cast

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YP. 31

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for the role of Cinderella in a farce where yesterday's ugly sisters will get all the money to support themselves in luxury buildings generously staffed. The grammar school has stood for exact values in scholarship. When superficiality is rampant, it is unfortunate that any influence making for thoroughness, precision and discipline should be weakened. Mr. Davies deplores the time-lag "before we manage to explode the fallacy that in some mysterious way the grammar school is superior to the modern school." There is no mystery about it. The one has traditional experience behind it and has a defined if limited aim. The other has so far defied definition by even its warmest advocates. A cynic once said that no school is happy unless it has another school to look down upon. This is an exaggeration, but parity of esteem has to be won and cannot be created overnight by Act of Parliament. In subsequent editions the sex of Professor Valentine, referred to on consecutive pages as "she" and "he," might be established.

JOHN GARRETT

AN UNSENTIMENTAL EDUCATION

My Days of Anger. By JAMES T. FARRELL. *Routledge.* 10s. 6d.

In spite of considerable merits, this book stops short of excellence. It has been stripped to the bone of all obvious attractions, but has not achieved the distinction which redeems such austerity. Even the hero, Danny O'Neill, though not unsympathetic, is deliberately drawn as a dry and restricted character, resentful rather than rebellious. Three years of his life, from 1925-27, are described, years of grinding work interspersed with even more dreary gaieties, in the joyless streets of the Irish quarter in Chicago. The narrow Catholicism of his upbringing and the intellectual mediocrity of his family have produced in him a crude and passionate desire for education and worldly success. He works his way through the university, and emerges as a journalist, having lost his romantic illusions, his faith and his respect for the established order, but with his simple personal ambition changed to a determination to "avenge his people"—the downtrodden and oppressed.

The world of characters created by Mr. Farrell is convincing and consistent, and he has a remorseless ear for idiom and cliché. The "Thought Diary" of Danny's unsophisticated days, the debates and discussions at the university, are registered with brilliant though painful accuracy. Much of this precise observation must be lost on English readers; indeed, the book as a whole probably loses by export. Time as well as space has been unkind to the author. The issues that stirred an undergraduate twenty years ago now arouse only faint ripples of partisan feeling.

The weakness of *My Days of Anger* is not so much its absence of light and shade as a lack of intensity; it smoulders evenly from beginning to end with never a blaze or a spark. But it is impossible to avoid feeling grateful to the author for his professional standards and his skill, which inspire a rare feeling of peaceful confidence in the reader.

CRESSIDA RIDLEY

Three Russian Prophets. By NICHOLAS ZERNOV. *Student Christian Movement Press.* 8s. 6d.

There has been a vogue for Berdyaev recently, but apart from his books, Russian philosophy and religious speculation are little known in England. The three writers dealt with here, Khomiakov (1804–60), Dostoevsky (1821–81) and Soloviev (1853–1900) are typically Russian in the importance they attach to *Sobornost*, the community-spirit, and in their belief in Russia's spiritual—one might almost say Messianic—mission: two features of Russian thought that have always been present and are as alive under Communism as they were in Tsarist times. They are typically Russian, too, in their intransigence (young Soloviev burning his sacred ikons in a sudden fit of disillusionment is a symbol, as it were, of Slav extremism, the antithesis of Western *via media* and compromise) and in the East-West duel that goes on in their minds: how to combine Russian (Moscow) thought with European (St. Petersburg) efficiency—a duel that is for ever being fought in Russia. Common to all three writers was their belief in the superiority of the Russian Orthodox Church over the Western forms of Christianity. Russian Christianity, they argue, is the primitive, unadulterated faith, whereas Western Churches have corrupted it by power politics (Catholicism) and ultra-individualism (Protestantism) and have substituted "Pie in the sky" for the task of building God's Kingdom on earth. Khomiakov and Dostoevsky would have liked to convert Western Europe to Russian Christianity; Soloviev (in many ways the most interesting of the three, despite Dostoevsky's fame as a novelist: among other strange adventures, he saw a vision of the Divine Sophia, "a woman of unsurpassable beauty," in the British Museum of all places) aimed at reconciliation and unity between the churches. Both Dostoevsky and Soloviev were convinced of Western Europe's impending collapse and believed that only a return to Christian values could save her civilisation.

Zernov echoes their judgments, and with the same Slavonic vehemence has nothing but rude words to say of the Soviet regime in Russia. "Russia has fallen into the hands of the atheists," and that is all there is to the matter. A pity this, as he will alienate many readers in this way. A country with Russia's history and traditions can hardly fail to have a big swing-back to religion before long, but it will be a Communism that will absorb religion, not religious Communism.

This book, unlike so many books by émigré authors, is written in excellent English, and it is rich in quotable quotations. The chapter called "The Russian Background" should be read (like Pares's Penguin) by anyone wanting to make a serious study of Russian life and letters.

The Regions of Germany. By ROBERT E. DICKINSON. *Kegan Paul.* 10s. 6d.

This book does not fulfil what the blurb promises to develop "a proposal which tends to paralyse the over-emphasis on Prussia" and to suggest "a regional redistribution which lays the geographical foundations for democratic co-operation." The book may be useful for the Allied administrator who wants to have quick and reliable information about the economical and geographical set-up of the regions in which he has to work, but Dr. Dickinson offers only vague generalisations with regard to the political and social problems which the Allied administrator has to face. "The problem for the Germans is to permit the free development of the democratic spirit . . . in the South and West, and to crush the unity of Prussia . . ." While it is true that historically the German West and South had some democratic traditions, the events of the last 70 years would not appear to vindicate Dr. Dickinson's statement, which for all practical purposes, is dangerous wishful thinking. Geographical analysis and interpretation cannot be separated from cautious and documented sociological analysis. In this respect, the book is inadequate.

Week-end Competition

No. 799

Set by Roger Marvell

Six guineas are offered for the best verses in the style of Milton, Matthew Arnold or Hopkins celebrating the reappearance in Piccadilly Circus of the Eros so inappropriately dedicated to the memory of Lord Shaftesbury. Not more than twenty lines. Entries by May 29.

"I say, this is excellent!"

"Of course it is. It's White Horse." "*But this tastes like pre-war whisky.*" "That's just what it is." "*How do you mean?*" "Well, the White Horse you get today was growing old when the war was young. It takes years to bring whisky to such perfection." "*But this is the sixth year of war.*" "Oh, it's no secret. They laid down large stocks of White Horse in the days of plenty. That's why the White Horse you get today — when you're lucky — is still as fine as a fine liqueur."

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ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR

MR. R. D. TROTTER'S STATEMENT.

THE Annual General Court of the Alliance Assurance Company, Ltd., will be held at the offices of the Company on May 23rd, 1945. The following are extracts from the review by the Chairman (Mr. R. D. Trotter) circulated with the report:—

In the life department the net new business completed shows a slight increase over that of the previous year, the comparative figures being £1,210,889 in 1943 and £1,399,439 in 1944, which I hope foreshadows that our prospects in this department are becoming brighter. The claims by death in the year under review were a good deal higher than for the previous year, standing at £746,157, of which £160,098 represented war claims. In 1943 the total claims by death amounted to £701,082, £91,969 being the amount paid out in war claims.

The total amount paid out in war claims now amounts to £468,557. At the close of the year the "Alliance" life and annuity funds amounted to £23,415,196. Turning to the fire department accounts, I have pleasure in reporting an increased net premium income amounting to £2,557,803, which is the first occasion in the history of the Company that we have exceeded the two and a half million mark. This is due in large measure to the enhanced value of buildings and commodities.

The claims and contributions to fire brigades were higher than in the previous year, amounting to £775,953, as compared with £683,255 in 1943.

After adjusting reserves for unexpired risks the sum of £564,459 has been carried to profit and loss account. Our overseas business continues to increase in volume and shows a satisfactory profit.

The accident department shows further satisfactory expansion, the net premium income at £1,315,191 showing an increase of £71,633 over the figures for 1943.

After the necessary adjustments of the reserves for unexpired risks a surplus of £291,091 is disclosed, which has been carried to profit and loss account.

The marine department results have turned out better than one might expect. The net premium income for the year under review amounts to £1,045,744, an increase of £18,182 over the previous year's figure.

The underwriting account for 1942 showed a balance of £50,983 after maintaining the reserve fund for previous years at £425,000 and this amount has been carried to the profit and loss account.

The trustee department continues to expand, and it is hoped that our many friends will make use of this department by appointing the Company as their trustee and/or executors. Turning now to our investments, the stock ex securities (all funds) once more appreciated in value. We have fully given effect to the Government's expressed wish and have invested a further sum of £1,720,000 in Government war loans during the year.

This year marks the centenary of our associated office the Law Fire Insurance Society, Ltd. In 1907, when we acquired the stock of that Society, the premium income was £163,000 and the profit was £71,313. At the close of its financial year 1944 the premium income was £345,000 and the profit £114,355.

Our associated engineering office, the National Boiler and General Insurance Company, Ltd., has had another successful year. The results have justified them in again increasing the dividend, from which we benefit.

ESULT OF COMPETITION No. 796

t by Sam Smiles

Six guineas are offered for a character in 10 rhymed uplets.

eport by Sam Smiles

L. V. Upward produced a character of the competi-n-setter, complaining that the subjects usually do t abound in calls on ingenuity or wit. I can answer ly that the ingenuity and wit, even if uncalled, ariably appear. He also complains that the meaning the competition is not always clear, and this accusa-n is supported by the fact that several competitors fered the "character" of an employee. Of course y qualified, but none was quite good enough for a ize. I recommend that the prizes be divided tween D. Hamilton-Bradbury, Maud Budden, J. P. Hewison, Little Billee, Colin Flood Page, and n Russell. The runners-up are Tahnit, D. H., slie Johnson, E. T. S., Hardy Amies, L. E. S., A. P., Yorick, Sandra, Pibwob, Allan M. Laing, . Hindley, Reginald Reynolds, Zenobia, and Sir bert Witt.

CHELSEA PENSIONER

There he goes in pensive stage—
Soldier of another age!

Twinkling eyes are keenly set,
Deeply where the years have met.

Steadily he makes his way;
On his chest hang medals gay.

Coat of scarlet, brushed and neat,
Soldier-like from head to feet.

Cheerfully he drinks his ale,
Slowly tells his cherished tale.

Pipe aglow and eyes agleam,
Mutters on as in a dream.

Year by year he wanders back;
Rheumy fingers bend and crack.

Says he's nearly eighty-nine—
Remnant of a thin red line.

There he goes, back on parade,
Grand old man who made the grade.

Back to Chelsea, whilst I sigh:
Red-backed soldiers never die!

D. HAMILTON-BRADBURY

THE SUBURBAN LADY

"I *wish* I had the time to read."
"Partner, you didn't watch my lead!"
"I'm quite *devoted* to her, but . . ."
"My butcher *wangled* me this cut."
"I can't afford to give a *sou*."
"I've bagged my hubby's coupons, too!"
"I do my war work in the *home*."
"Don't you *adore* my garden gnome?"
"At least he *is* a gentleman."
"My dear, I am a Boyer *fan*."
"My skivvy's left me in the lurch."
"I know one *ought* to go to church."
"I wish I weren't so highly strung."
"I think all Conchies should be *hung*."
"He must go to a *decent* school."
"Oh, isn't Churchill *wonderful*?"
"If you could *see* her kitchen shelves!"
"I'd teach the poor to help *themselves*."
"I never listen to the news."
"Of course, I wouldn't *torture* Jews."

MAUD BUDDEN

A PUBLIC SERVANT

Of erudition full, with due degrees,
He wore his learning with conspicuous ease;
And, that no hint of don in him he found,
Pressed both feet firmly on pragmatic ground.
Past-master of the bureaucratic craft—
The minute, memorandum, précis, draft,
The marginally annotated sneer,
When to write "Sir" and when employ "My Dear."
He'd formulate a plan, rough out a scheme
(The while recounting yesternight's old dream),
With facts well-groomed and telling figures ranged:
The objective alters—all to suit is changed.
A friend to all, excepting frauds and fools,
As often breaking as enforcing rules,
Ready to make as follow precedent,
And all to impatient execution bent,
A mighty load of cares he gaily bore,
And, loving honours, loved his honour more.
One attribute this desk-Napoleon lacked;
Full of diplomacy, he wanted tact.

R. J. P. HEWISON

EVANGELICAL UNCLE

We might expect, when staying with Uncle James,
Too much religion, too little fun and games.
We watched him stride, with stiff determination
Top-hatted, down the highway of salvation.
How he would over-awe us, innocent friskers,
By precepts, punishments, long prayers, and whiskers,
For little pilgrims, too, had Heaven to win;
Sunday was Sunday; sin was always sin.
We'd know he's "at the office" every day
(From which two weekly pennies came our way)
But still across our sport his shadow falls,
For Uncle's eye, like God's, can see through walls,
And solemnly, at tea-time, we must tell
Whether that day we had done ill or well.
Yet sometimes through our hair—by accident?—
With tender touch a wandering finger went,
And Mary said that once, through a crack peeping,
She'd seen him kneeling by his bed and weeping,
And sometimes, shyly using our pet names,
He'd bring out sweetmeats—good old Uncle James!

LITTLE BILLEE

LIEUT. "X"

(A senior subaltern, war emergency commission, four years' service, home station)

Awakened by a cup of tea,
Half-cold, in chipped mess crockery,
He gulps a hasty breakfast down
Beneath the O.C.'s watchful frown.
Five minutes later, on the square,
He dons the gruff, commissioned stare
And carries out the day's routine
With temper more reserved than keen.
At length the grey day's chores are done,
The last imagined battle won,
He blossoms into service dress,
With Sam Browne glossy leaves the mess,
Adorns with nonchalance and smiles
The local bar, where all his wiles,
His stratagems, his burdens, snags,
His little triumphs, turn to brags.
In genial alcoholic state
He lightly keeps a heavy date,
Until with dim, contented head
And well-bagged eyes he crawls to bed.

COLIN FLOOD PAGE (Lt. R.A.)

The studied man of letters, pompous, vain,
Who floats amid the flotsam of the brain;
A catalogue of verse, a broken prism
Of undiscriminating criticism;
Joiner of tiny sense to tinkling sound,
Who, twice rereading, finds himself profound;
Whose real delight—the vapid face proclaims—
Is the blithe bandying of famous names.
To say, Here Dryden dined, or Byron slept!
—And all day long quotations, all inept. . . .
"Perchance to dream"—and then "That noble brow";
"Nothing can come of nothing"; "Soft you now."
Debasing all he touches, yet he draws
From awe-struck simpletons their cheap applause;
Converses, not so much as, thinks aloud,
And sees himself the Johnson of the crowd.
Heavily light, extravagantly thin,
He wades in words, and reasons but to win;
Now eulogises what he'll soon condemn;
Recants *ad hoc*, and scores *ad hominem*.

ALAN RUSSELL

Company Meeting

AULT AND WIBORG

RECORD TURNOVER

THE eleventh ordinary general meeting of ult and Wiborg, Ltd., was held on May ith in London.

MR. GERALD WELLESLEY (the chairman) aid that the total turnover of the parent ompany and its subsidiaries was a record ne, but once again owing to the lower argin of profit on sales this increase in usiness was not reflected proportionately in he net profit, which amounted to £94,546.

The directors recommended the transfer to eserve account of £15,000 and the payment f a dividend of 6½ per cent., less tax, on he Ordinary shares. They also recommended further dividend of 6 per cent., less tax, n the Ordinary shares, making 12½ per cent., ss tax, in all.

Since the company was formed rather over n years ago the net assets had increased om £350,000 to £606,642.

The main increase in turnover had been in heir principal peacetime products—namely, rinters' inks and rollers, varnishes, paints, ndustrial finishes and metal decorating pro-ucts.

Shareholders would be interested to know hat among other things the company had roduced during the war were rubber inghies and flotation gear for aircraft; com-onent parts for aircraft; drill shells and ose caps; aerial systems; tank components; eel sleeves for bullets; plastic components or aircraft; and various chemicals directly sed in the war effort. To have handled the anufacture of so wide a range of articles was o mean achievement for a company which t the outbreak of war was almost entirely oncerned with the manufacture of printing nks and accessories required by the printing rade, and paint and industrial finishes.

The report was unanimously adopted.

UNITED MOLASSES CO.

THE nineteenth Annual General Meeting of the United Molasses Company, Limited, will be held in London on May 29th. The following are extracts from the statement by the Chairman and Joint Managing Director (Mr. F. K. Kielberg) circulated with the report:—

The trading profits for the year, amounting to £960,000, include "profits from prior years now available." A similar notation has appeared in the reports for the last three to four years and is likely to continue for some years to come. Had we not adopted this method of dealing with the accounts, but waited until all outstanding claims were finally settled and rates of hire agreed with the Ministry of War Transport, the publication of the accounts would have been delayed for years.

A position of great financial strength is disclosed by the statement of combined assets and liabilities, which shows free reserves and undistributed profits at December 31st, 1944, of £4,094,676, compared with the issued ordinary capital of £1,954,500. Current assets, at £8,285,021, exceeded current liabilities of £1,609,366 by £6,675,655. Investments in British Government dated securities stood at £6,168,808, showing an increase of £415,000 on the previous year.

Having regard to the Company's free reserves and strong liquid position, combined with the satisfactory earnings record of the last ten years, your directors feel that a slightly higher distribution is justified and recommend the payment of a final dividend of 15 per cent. on the ordinary stock.

Trading during the first four months of the current year has been satisfactory and the immediate prospects indicate no change in this respect. The comparative stability of combined earnings during recent years is, to a large extent, due to the success of the board's policy of widening the basis of your Company's activities.

Personal

URGENT. Lady makes dainty, charming sun-bonnets to fit girls, all ages, 1/-, incl. postage. Satisfaction guaranteed, worth double. Cash with order. Shops supplied. Hollands, Hilton, nr. Blandford, Dorset.

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NON-Party League offers to the ordinary citizen the opportunity to exert continual check upon activities of those who hold (or seek to attain) financial and political power to create conditions under which rest of us have to live. Manifesto from Gen. Sec., Hopedene, South Holmwood, Surrey.

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